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RUSSIAN MEMORIES

By

MADAME OLGA NOVIKOFF

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RUSSIAN MEMORIES

BY

MADAME OLGA NOVIKOFF
"O. K."

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
STEPHEN GRAHAM

AND FIFTEEN
ILLUSTRATIONS

HERBERT JENKINS LIMITED
12 ARUNDEL PLACE HAYMARKET
LONDON S.W. ❀ ❀ MCMXVII

WILLIAM BRENDON AND SON, LTD., PRINTERS, PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND

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INTRODUCTION

By STEPHEN GRAHAM

IT is perhaps a little superfluous for one of my years to write an introduction for one so well known and so much esteemed and admired as Madame Novikoff. And yet it may seem just, if it does not seem vain, that a full-hearted tribute should come to her from this generation which profits by the result of her life and her work—the great new friendship between England and Russia.

She is one of the most interesting women in European diplomatic circles. She is a picturesque personality, but more than that she is one who has really done a great deal in her life. You cannot say of her, as of so many brilliant women, "She was born, she was admired, she passed!" Destiny used her to accomplish great ends.

For many in our society life, she stood for Russia, *was* Russia. For the poor people of England Russia was represented by the filth of the Ghetto and the crimes of the so-called "political" refugees; for the middle classes who read Seton Merriman, Russia was a fantastic country of revolutionaries and bloodthirsty police; but fortunately the ruling and upper classes always have had some better vision, they have had the means of travel, they have seen real representative Russians in their midst.

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"They are barbarians, these Russians!" says someone to his friend. But the friend turns a deaf ear. "I happen to know one of them," says he.

A beautiful and clever woman always charms, whatever her nationality may be, and it is possible for her to make conquests that predicate nothing of the nation to which she belongs. That is true, and therein lay the true grace and genius of Madame Novikoff. She was not merely a clever and charming woman, she was Russia herself. Russia lent her charm. Thus her friends were drawn from serious and vital England.

Gladstone learned from her what Russia was. The great Liberal, the man who, whatever his virtues, and despite his high religious fervour, yet committed Liberalism to anti-clericalism and secularism, learned from her to pronounce the phrase, "Holy Russia." He esteemed her. With his whole spiritual nature he exalted her. She was his Beatrice, and to her more than to anyone in his life he brought flowers. Morley has somehow omitted this in his biography of Gladstone. Like so many intellectual Radicals he is afraid of idealism. But in truth the key to the more beautiful side of Gladstone's character might have been found in his relationship to Madame Novikoff. And possibly that friendship laid the real foundation of the understanding between the two nations.

Incidentally let me remark the growing friendliness towards Russia which is noticeable in the work of Carlyle at that time. A tendency towards friendship came thus into the air far back in the Victorian era.

Another most intimate friendship was that of Kinglake and Madame Novikoff, where again was real appreciation of a fine woman. Anthony Froude worshipped at the same shrine, and W. T. Stead with many another in whose heart and hand was the making of modern England.

A marvellously generous and unselfish nature, incapacity to be dull or feel dull or think that life is dull—a delicious sense of the humorous, an ingenious mind, a courtliness, and with all this something of the goddess. She had a presence into which people came. And then she had a visible Russian soul. There was in her features that unfamiliar gleam which we are all pursuing now, through opera, literature and art—the Russian genius.

Madame Novikoff was useful to Russia, it has been reproachfully said. Yes, she was useful in promoting peace between the two Empires, she was worth an army in the field to Russia. Yes, and now it may be said she has been worth an army in the field to us.

When Stead went down on the *Titanic* one of the last of the great men who worshipped at her shrine had died. Be it remarked how great was Stead's faith in Russia, and especially in the Russia of the Tsar and the Church. And it is well to remember that Madame Novikoff belongs to orthodox Russia and has never had any sympathy whatever with revolutionary Russia. This has obtained for her not a few enemies. There are many Russians with strong political views, estimable but misguided men, who have issued in the past such harmful rubbish as *Darkest Russia*, journals and pamphlets wherein

systematically everything to the discredit of the Tsar and his Government, every ugly scandal or enigmatical happening in Russian contemporary life was written up and then sent post free to our clergy, etc. To them Madame Novikoff is naturally distasteful. But as English people we ask, who has helped us to understand "Brightest Russia"—the Russia in arms to-day? And the praise and the thanks are to her.

STEPHEN GRAHAM.

Moscow,
27th August, 1916.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE late W. T. Stead in saying to Madame Novikoff, "When you die, what an obituary I will write of you," was paying her a great compliment; just as was Disraeli, although unconsciously, in referring to her as "the M.P. for Russia in England." With that consummate tact which never fails her, Madame Novikoff has evaded the compliment and justified the sarcasm. Disraeli might with justice have added that she was also "M.P. for England in Russia"; for if she has appeared pro-Russian in England, she has many times been reproached in Russia as pro-English.

Of few women have such contradictory things been said and written, things that clearly show the gradual change in the political barometer; but her most severe critics indirectly paid tribute to her remarkable personality by fearing the influence she possessed. In the dark days when Great Britain and Russia were thinking of each other only as potential antagonists, she was regarded in this country as a Russian agent, whose every action was a subject for suspicious speculation, a national danger, a syren whose object it was to entice British

politicians from their allegiance. Wherever she went it was, according to public opinion, with some fell purpose in view. If she came to London for the simple purpose of improving her English, it meant to a certain section of the Press Russian "diplomatic activity." The Tsar was told by an English journalist that he ought to "be very proud of her," as she succeeded where "Russian papers, Ambassadors and Envoys failed"; another said that she was "worth an army of 100,000 men to her country"; a third that she was a "stormy petrel." She was, in fact, everything from a Russian agent to a national danger, everything in short but the one thing she professed to be, a Russian woman anxious for her country's peace and progress.

In Serbia there is a little village whose name commemorates the death of a Russian hero, Nicolas Kiréef, Madame Novikoff's brother. In his death lay the seed of the Anglo-Russian Alliance. Distraught with grief, Madame Novikoff blamed Great Britain for her loss. She argued that, had this country refused to countenance the unspeakableness of the Turk in 1876, there would have been no atrocities, no Russian Volunteers, and no war. From that date she determined to do everything that lay in her power to bring about a better understanding between Great Britain and Russia. For years she has never relaxed her efforts, and she has lived to see what is perhaps the greatest monument ever erected by a sister to a brother's memory—the Anglo-Russian Alliance.

Nothing discouraged her, and at times, when war seemed inevitable, she redoubled her efforts. In all her work, she had chiefly to depend on her own ardour and sincerity. It was this sincerity, and a deep conviction as to the rightness of her object, that caused Gladstone to become her fearless ally. Politically he compromised himself by his frank support of her pleadings for peace and understanding.

For many years feeling ran too high in this country for a reasoned consideration of Madame Novikoff's appeals. "Peace with honour" talk became a meaningless catch phrase, otherwise it would have been seen that it was "peace with honour" that she advocated, and has never ceased to advocate, peace with honour, not to one, but to two great peoples.

Slowly the eyes of empire shifted from one continent to another, and gradually Madame Novikoff found her voice commanding more and more attention, until at last the Anglo-Russian Agreement paved the way for the present Alliance.

Her success is largely due to the methods she adopted. She gave and received hard knocks, and she never fell back upon her sex as an argument or a defence. She was fighting with men, and she fought with men's weapons, and this gained for her respect as an honourable and worthy antagonist. Even at the time when feeling was most strongly against her work, there appeared in the newspapers many spontaneous tributes to her ability and personality.

The very suspicion with which she was regarded was in itself a tribute.

Later when Russia and Great Britain had drawn closer together, there appeared in the Press some of the most remarkable tributes ever paid to a woman, from which in justice to her and the Press I venture to quote a few of the many that appeared.

"If we were writing at a date which we hope is a good many years distant of the career of Madame Olga Novikoff, we should begin by saying that she was one of the most remarkable women of her time."—*Daily Graphic.*

"Whatever the reader's political predilections may be, he is unlikely to dispute the claim of Madame Novikoff to rank as one of the most remarkable women of her generation."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"No one will deny the right of Madame Novikoff to a record in history. . . . For nearly ten years her influence was probably greater than any other woman's upon the course of national politics."—*Daily News.*

Madame Novikoff, "who for so many years held a social and political position in London which few women, and no ambassador, have ever equalled."—*Observer.*

"From beginning to end Madame Novikoff's record is clear and honourable. There is not the slightest evidence of any intrigue on her part, of any effort to use the statesman she influenced for underhand purposes, or to work for or against any

particular individual in her own country."—*Westminster Gazette.*

"It is seldom that anyone sees such a fruition of his labours as does this marvellous lady, who has worked all her life for one thing and almost one thing only—an Anglo-Russian understanding."—*Daily Mail.*

And now in the autumn of her life (it is impossible to associate the word winter with so vital a personality) Madame Novikoff has seen her years of work crowned with success. To-day she is as keen in regard to public affairs, especially where her beloved Russia is concerned, as she was in the days when her life was one continuous fight with the war-spirit. In the preparation of these Memories I have seen something of her application, her industry and her personality. In the past I have often asked myself what was the secret of Madame Novikoff's remarkable success. But now I know. Time after time when we have seen things from a different angle, I have found myself accepting her point of view before I was even conscious of weakening.

Of all the compliments ever paid to Madame Novikoff, the one that probably pleases her most is that which recently appeared in a London daily written by a famous writer upon Russian life, who described her as "a true Russian."

This is not an autobiography; for Madame Novikoff has always refused to undertake such a responsibility. In the first place she thinks it

would be too long, and in the second too personal. "I have been talked about quite enough," she will say, "without starting to talk about myself." In 1909 there appeared *The M.P. for Russia*, edited by the late W. T. Stead, which told much of her association with her distinguished friends, Gladstone, Kinglake, Villiers, Clarendon, Carlyle, Tyndall, Froude and others. "These have been taken," she says, "and I am left." But she has continued her work, and many of her friends have told her that at this time, above all others, she should tell personally something of her Russian memories. As she phrases it, "For forty years I have been wandering in the Wilderness, and now I have been permitted the happiness of entering the Promised Land. At last the gates have been opened. We are now brothers-in-arms."

THE EDITOR.

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S PREFACE . . . . . *Page* 5

CHAPTER I

THE RUSSIAN SPIRIT

July 1914—Enthusiasm at Moscow—My Ambition Realised—England and Russia Allies—A War of Right—Wounded Heroes—Russia's Faith in Victory—Our Emperor's Call—England's Greatness—I am Introduced to Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli—"The M.P. for Russia in England"—Mr. Gladstone's Championship—An Unpopular Cause 17

CHAPTER II

THE AWAKENING OF RUSSIA

A New Era—My Brother Nicholas—Hadji Ghiray: Hero—Terrible News—A Heroic Advance—My Brother's Death—Aksakoff's Famous Speech—Russia Aflame—A Nation's Sacrifice—My Heart-broken Letters—Mr. Gladstone's Response—Mutual Suspicion—My Visits to England 29

CHAPTER III

MR. GLADSTONE AND I STRIVE FOR PEACE

The Real England—The St. James's Hall Meeting—Remarkable Enthusiasm—Mr. Gladstone's Speech—He Escorts Me Home—Newspaper Comment—Lord Salisbury and General Ignatieff—Mutual Regard—The Turks Displeased—An Embarrassing Tribute—The End of the Constantinople Conference—Mr. Gladstone Compromised—War Declared—"What Will England Do?"—Bismarck's Policy—Prince Gortschakoff's Opinion . 43

CHAPTER IV

MR. GLADSTONE

His Last Utterance—His Fearlessness—His Opinion of *Russia and England*—A Christian Revolution—Cardinal Manning's Tribute—Gladstone and the Old Catholics—The Question of Immortality—Mr. Gladstone's Remarkable Letter—A Delightful Listener—His Power of Concentration—Hayward and Gladstone—Their Discussion—Miss Helen Gladstone—We Talk Gladstone—The Old Lady's Delight—I Miss my Train 53

CHAPTER V

SOME SOCIAL MEMORIES

My Thursdays in Russia—Khalil Pasha's Death—Lord Napier and the Lady-in-Waiting—Madame Volnys—My Parents-in-law's *ménage* —An Exceptional Type—Prince Vladimir Dolgorouki's Embarrassment—The Grand Duchess Helen—A Brilliant Woman—The Emperor's Enjoyment—The Campbell-Bannermans—A Royal Diplomatist—Mark Twain on Couriers—In Serious Vein —Verestchagin—"The Retreat from Moscow"—The Kaiser's Remarkable Utterance . . . . . *Page* 72

CHAPTER VI

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS I

A Pacific Emperor—An Imperial Fault—The Pauper's Funeral—The Emperor's Visit to my Mother—My Dilemma—The Emperor's Kindness—He is Snubbed by an *Ingénue*—The Emperor's Desire for an Alliance with England—Prince Gortschakoff's Rejoinder—The Slav Ideal—Russia and Constantinople—Bismarck's Admiration—He Discomfits a Member of the Reichstag . . 89

CHAPTER VII

"AS OTHERS SEE US"

"A Russian Agent"—"To Lure British Statesmen"—A Charming Tribute—The Press at Sea—Wild Stories—A Musical Political Agitator—"An Unofficial Ambassador"—Baron de Staal's Indifference—Prince Lobanoff's Kindness—Count Shouvaloff's Dislike of my Work—Prince Gortschakoff and the Slavs—Baron Brunow and the French Ambassador—English Sportsmanship—A Shakespeare Banquet 99

CHAPTER VIII

JEWISH RUSSOPHOBIA

The Jews and the War—Their Attitude in 1876—Their Hatred of Slavism—The Problems of Other Countries—English Sympathy —The Guildhall Meeting—The Russian Government Blamed—Tolstoy and the Jews—My Jewish Friends—A Curious Tradition —Self-protection 112

CHAPTER IX

ENGLAND AND THE GREAT FAMINE IN RUSSIA

My Russian Home—The Horrors of Famine—The Peasants' Heroism —Starving yet Patient—The Society of Friends—I am Invited to Meeting—Magnificent Munificence—Among the Starving—Terrible Hardships—Some Illustrations—Living in Dug-outs—The Stoical Russian—Cinder Bread 124

CHAPTER X

MUSICAL MEMORIES

My Mother—Her Musical Friends—I Study with Masset—His Generous Offer—Litolff's Visit—My Mother's Musicales Develop into a Conservatoire—Rubinstein's Anger—His Refusal to Play for the Grand Duchess Helen—The Idols of the Musical World—A Friendly Jealousy—My Stratagem with Liszt—Glasounoff's Kindness—the Musicless . . . . . *Page* 138

CHAPTER XI

THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

A Fatal Treaty—Gladstone's Opinion—The Concert of Europe—The Unspeakable Turk and His Methods—England's Responsibility—Mr. Gladstone's Energetic Action—Lord Rosebery Resigns—Gladstone's Astounding Letter—"I Shall Keep Myself to Myself"—"Abdul the Damned"—"A Man whose Every Impulse is Good"—The Convention of Cyprus—Russia and England . 147

CHAPTER XII

THE SOBERING OF RUSSIA

Russian Dreamers—Fighting a Curse—First Steps—An Interesting Encounter—A Great Reform—Its Acceptance by the Peasants—The Cabman's Interrogative—He Begs me to Intercede with the Tsar—The Temptation of Drink—My Peasant Teas—The Drink Habit—Our Courageous Emperor 165

CHAPTER XIII

MISCELLANEOUS MEMORIES

My Embarrassment—A Spy—I Am Easily Taken In—A Demand for Fifty Pounds—A Threat—I Defy the Blackmailer—A Warning—Gladstone's Refusal to meet Gambetta—My Husband's Dilemma—Russian Views on Duelling—Kinglake Challenges Prince Louis Napoleon—My Brother's Views—Kinglake's Charm—The Value of an Englishman—The Dogger Bank Incident . 182

CHAPTER XIV

THE PHANTOM OF NIHILISM

England's Sympathy with the Nihilists—Cabinet Ministers' Indiscretion—Mr. Gladstone's Incredulity—I Prove my Words—Mr. Gladstone's Action—A Strange Confusion—A Reformed Nihilist—His Significant Admission—The Nihilist's Regret—The Death of Revolutionary Russia—The Greatness of the Future—The Reckless, Impulsive Russian—The Russian Refugees at Buenos Ayres—They Crave for a Priest 199

CHAPTER XV

RUSSIAN PRISONS AND PRISONERS

Our Convict System—Misunderstood in England—Siberia, an Emigration Field—A Lax Discipline—Capt. Wiggins' Opinion—A Land of Stoicism—My Experiences as a Prison Visitor—Divine Literature—Helen Voronoff's Work—A Russian Heroine—Her Descriptions of Prison Life . . . . . *Page* 216

CHAPTER XVI

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Dostoyevsky's Call—His Retort to a Dandy—Russia and the Revolution—The Court of Imperial Mercy—How Political Prisoners May Solicit Pardon—The Coach-driver's Letter—The People's Belief in the Emperor—A Typical Russian Appeal—Military Offenders—How They Have Justified the Emperor's Clemency—Political Prisoners and the War 236

CHAPTER XVII

THE GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE AND PRINCE OLEG

A Remarkable Personality—The Grand Duke's Graciousness—His Tact and Sympathy—The Wounded Soldier—A Censored Book—Prince Oleg and my Brother Alexander—A Talented Child—A Strange Premonition—The Prince's Interest in Public Affairs—His Studious Nature—The Prince Wounded—His Joy on Receiving the Cross of St. George—He Becomes Worse—The End 247

CHAPTER XVIII

BULGARIA'S DEFECTION AND PRISONERS OF WAR

Russia Blamed for the Balkan Muddle—Bulgaria's Treachery—Gen. Grant on the Russians and Constantinople—Bulgaria's Dissatisfaction—The Reign of the Fox—The Treatment of Prisoners of War—The German Method—The Allies' Failure—Lack of Organisation—Insidious German Propagandism—Britain and Her Prisoners in Germany 264

CHAPTER XIX

THE RUSSIAN PARISH

The Revival of Parish Life—The Ancient Russian Parish—A Peaceful Community—Slavophils and the Parish—The Metropolitan and the Emperor Nicholas I—The Independence of the Church—Father John of Kronstadt—A Blessing to Russia . . . 278

CHAPTER XX

RUSSIA AND ENGLAND

A New Era—The Russian Ideal—The Trick of Double Nationality—Lord Kitchener's Legacy—The Armenian Inventor—The Kaiser and Double Nationality—The Future of Prussia—Russia's Hope of Victory—Germany's Influence on Anglo-Russian Friendship—Days of Suspicion—Lord Clarendon's Opinion—An ex-Cabinet Minister's Boast—Russian Memories of England—A Glorious Future 286

ILLUSTRATIONS

The Empress of Russia and Queen Alexandra	*Frontispiece*
	TO FACE PAGE
W. E. Gladstone (April 5, 1892)	24
Nicolas Kiréeff	32
Myself in 1876	40
Seminary for 125 School Teachers built by Alexander Novikoff at Novo-Alexandrofka	80
St. Olga's School for Girl Teachers at Novo-Alexandrofka	100
My Son, Alexander Novikoff	126
Nicolas Rubinstein Anton Rubinstein	138
The Clergy and Choir of Novo-Alexandrofka, 1900, on the Day of the Consecration of the Church	176
Alexander Kiréeff	190
Church built by Alexander Novikoff on His Father's Grave at Novo-Alexandrofka	200
Miss Helen Voronoff	226
The Grand Duke Constantine Nicolaévitch	248
St. Olga's School for Girl Teachers at Nova-Alexandrofka	270
Myself with my Faithful Max at Brunswick Place, N.W.	290

RUSSIAN MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

THE RUSSIAN SPIRIT

July 1914—Enthusiasm at Moscow—My Ambition Realised—England and Russia Allies—A War of Right—Wounded Heroes—Russia's Faith in Victory—Our Emperor's Call—England's Greatness—I am Introduced to Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli —" The M.P. for Russia in England "—Mr. Gladstone's Championship—An Unpopular Cause

I WAS in Moscow when our Monarch's mighty voice sounded in defence of little Serbia. I was driving near the Tverskoi Boulevard, when a shouting crowd rushed past me, and burst into a neighbouring restaurant.

" What does it all mean ? " I exclaimed. " Is it a riot ? do they want drink ? "

" Oh no," said the bystanders. " They only want to call out the orchestra and make them play the national hymn."

I stopped my carriage.

The orchestra appeared, and played our God save the Tzar, while the whole crowd, wild with enthusiasm, joined in.

Delighted and touched, I followed them. Most were singing and shouting " Hurrah," some praying and making the sign of the cross, while the throng continually increased.

Similar scenes occurred daily in various quarters of the town. One evening, an idle crowd had assembled near St. Saviour's Church. A priest appeared with a cross. The whole crowd fell on their knees and prayed. Such moments one cannot forget—indeed one can only thank God for them.

People say that in Petrograd the demonstrations were still grander. It may be so—but whenever the Emperor visits Moscow, and speaks there with his powerful, animating voice, the old capital rises to unapproachable heights of enthusiasm and to resolutions of unbounded self-sacrifice.

A few days later I realised that the great ambition of my life was about to be realised, not only by an *entente*, but by an alliance between Russia and the country that has given me so many friends and shown me such splendid hospitality. Yet how differently everything had happened from what I had anticipated after the signing of the Anglo-Russian Agreement. It was not the gradual drawing together of the two countries that each might enjoy the peaceful friendship of the other: but the sudden discovery that they had a common foe to fight, a common ideal to preserve, a common civilisation to save.

Years ago I wrote, "I want to be a harbinger of peace, of hope, of prosperity to come," and yet here was my great ambition being realised to the sound of the drum and midst the thunder of the destroying guns.

History was repeating itself. As in 1875, a Slav nation was being oppressed, threatened with annihilation, and the great heart of Russia was moved.

I remember so well those days forty years ago when our Foreign Office tried all it could to stop the reckless chivalry of the Russian people—determined as all classes were to sacrifice everything, life itself even, for the sake of their oppressed co-religionists, the Bulgarians.

In that August thirty-eight years before (1876), Petrograd itself (always more cautious and reserved than Moscow) showed an enthusiasm for the cause of the Christian Slavs that daily gathered strength. It pervaded all classes from prince to peasant.

The sympathy of the masses had been evoked by the atrocities, committed in the usual unspeakable Turkish fashion, in Bulgaria. That sympathy, however, bore chiefly a religious, not a political character, and as in almost all great national movements our Emperor identified himself with his people. Public collections were being made for the sick and wounded.

Officers of the Red Cross and ladies of the Court and society went from house to house requesting subscriptions.

At railway stations, on the steam-boats, even on the tramways, the "Red Cross" was present everywhere, with a sealed box for donations. Every effort was made to animate feelings of compassion for the suffering Christians, and to swell the funds for providing ambulances for the sick and wounded.

And now in 1914 another great national emotion had swept over three hundred millions of people. This was not a war of greed or gain; it was not concerned with some insult levelled at Russia or the violation of her frontiers; it was the result of a

deep religious sense of justice in the hearts of the people. It was what in England would be called "the sporting instinct" which forbids a big man to hit another smaller than himself.

No power could have held back the chivalrous Russians from going to the aid of threatened Serbia. All recognised that a terrible and fateful day had dawned, and throughout the dark days of the autumn of 1915, the people never flinched from the task they had undertaken. They were pledged to save Serbia.

Russians believed, still believe and will always believe, in the sacredness of an oath given in the name of God. Certain words indeed are not meaningless sounds! To such sacred promises naturally belongs also the oath of allegiance.

For centuries confidence and harmony reigned between all the Russian subjects. Now, the blasphemous Kaiser was trying to abolish every moral and religious tie. Could anything be more cruel and mischievous?

Everywhere it was the same. When I visited the wounded in my Tamboff country place, our poor soldiers, in answer to my queries as to their wants and desires, answered quite simply, not in the least realising the nobleness of their feeling:

"If God would only make us strong enough to go and punish the infamous enemy. You do not know the harm done to our fields, our churches, our brothers."

The tone of this and similar remarks was very striking. One of the wounded was a Mohammedan. I do not know whether it is wise or not, but the

Mohammedans in Russia are treated exactly like other Russian subjects, and they know that in serving Russia they may attain the highest military positions, as did, for instance, General Ali Khanoff, and others of the same creed.

Russia, as a whole, has an unlimited faith in victory. The Russian Emperor's New Year's address echoed far and wide, like a clarion call, through the ranks of the Imperial army and fleet. All doubts vanished beyond recall, for the utterance of the Sovereign was more decided, definite and determined than any that had gone before. Here are words that must ring like a knell in the ears of exhausted Germany, trembling under the strain of her last efforts.

"A half-victory—an unfinished war"—this was the hideous phantom before which the hearts of our brave soldiers sank, and which, like a ceaseless nightmare, disturbed the rest, even of our most illiterate peasants. Far and wide, indeed, Russian hearts to-day thrill and respond to their beloved Emperor's call:

"Remember that without complete victory our dear Russia cannot ensure for herself and her people the independence that is her pride and her birthright, cannot enjoy and develop to the full the fruits of her labour and her natural wealth. Let your hearts be permeated with the consciousness that there can be no peace without victory. However great may be the sacrifice required of us, we must march onward unflinchingly, onward to triumph for our country and our cause."

The air vibrated with the echoes of these splendid

words—and the bereaved mothers, sisters, wives, weeping in the loneliness and despair of their broken hearts, look up and smile again, because Russia's blood has not been shed in vain. The news travelled on the wings of the wind, and over countless distant, unknown graves, it brought its message to our fallen heroes: "You shall be revenged, brave warriors; your souls shall celebrate the moment of triumph, together with your living brothers!"

It is good also to know that we are not alone in our determination, that our Allies are with us, and share our views.

Therefore, if we assume that Germany's entire population numbers about seventy millions, the outside limit for the numerical strength of her army can in no circumstance exceed ten millions, this being already 14 per cent of the whole nation, and a completely unprecedented percentage of the nation's manhood. Such figures, indeed, represent an entire people in arms—a people, however, that has taken upon itself the impossible task of measuring its strength against that of three other mighty peoples, armed, also, to the teeth. In this uneven struggle, Germany must ultimately, in spite of Austrian, Bulgarian and Turkish help, meet her ruin, and bleed to death.

We, in Russia, look forward to the future without fear. We stand united as one man. All political strifes and disagreements are forgotten; there is no division of parties, no discussion of any affairs of State except those connected with the war. "War, war, war, till victory, till triumph. There lies our future, and so shall it be." With these words our

Home Secretary, Monsieur Khvostoff, concluded his recent speech to the members of the Press Bureau. The same sentiments are echoed everywhere. We are determined and hopeful, and ready for every sacrifice, because, to quote our Empress Alexandra in her New Year's telegram to the Secretary of State, "A war that has been forced on us by our enemies, and that has attained dimensions unprecedented in history, naturally calls for immense sacrifices. But I know that the Russian people will not hesitate before these sacrifices, and will fight on nobly until the moment when God's blessing will bring to the glorious warriors who are shedding their blood for their fatherland and their Emperor, the peace that shall be bought by complete victory over our foes."

By these words may English people discern the spirit of their Russian friends, their faith in victory.

The difference between 1876 and 1914 is our attitude towards Great Britain. Whereas forty years ago we suspected, even hated, her, now we see her in her true colours. She is doing for Belgium what we once did for Bulgaria, and from a sense of right and political honour. She could have remained neutral, safe in her sea defences, devoting her time to capturing the trade of the combatants. Instead of which she chose to risk all in honouring her pledge. This fact brought Russia very near to Great Britain, and I hope the years that are coming will see a better understanding in Great Britain of the Russian Spirit.

And now something about myself. In 1873 Baron Brunow, the Russian Ambassador in London, introduced me to Mr. Gladstone and

Mr. Disraeli in the same evening. The one was to become a dear friend who was to give powerful support to my efforts to bring Russia and England closer together, whilst the other a few years later was to confer upon me the honorary title of which I have always been so proud. "Madame Novikoff," he said, during the Bulgarian agitation, when Mr. Gladstone and I were doing our utmost to negative his pro-Turkish activities, "I call Madame Novikoff the M.P. for Russia in England."

This remark was not intended to give me pleasure, although, now that my years of work have ended successfully, it may appear, as Mr. W. T. Stead said, "a flattering compliment."

At that time, however, Lord Beaconsfield was not feeling so cordial towards me as to frame graceful compliments, and he probably knew that, expert as he was in the art of flattery, nothing he could say would divert me from the path of antagonism towards his policy that I had chosen for myself.

"Ambassadors represent Governments, M.P.'s represent the people," Mr. Stead wrote, apropos Beaconsfield's remark, and I have always striven, however unworthily, to represent Russia, the most peace-loving nation in the world.

It was to the enjoyment of peace to my country that I first undertook my self-imposed work, the bringing of Great Britain and Russia to a better understanding that would result in their working together towards a common end—peace. It is a strange trick of fate that the two countries should eventually be brought together, not by peace but

W. Gladstone.
Sep. 6. 1892

by war; but the workings of Providence are inscrutable, and out of this great evil perhaps a still greater good may come.

By the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1908 the two countries became good friends, now they are allies. Britons are fighting in Russia under the Russian High Command, and it is no secret that British sailors are fighting ship by ship with Russian sailors in the Baltic; and with those who have fought together for a common cause, friendship and understanding are inevitable.

It is strange to look back upon what have come to be known as the "jingo days," when in the streets and music-halls was sung a ditty in which Britons told each other—I quote from memory:

> We don't want to fight; but, by jingo, if we do,
> We've got the men, we've got the ships, we've got the money too.

and all this was levelled at Russia, because she chose to do what Great Britain to her everlasting honour is doing to-day, avenging a downtrodden, but uncrushed people.

There was one man who saw clearly and stood up fearlessly against the popular clamour, and that was Mr. Gladstone. For twenty years he worked with me loyally towards the end I had in view. He never faltered in his denunciations of the unspeakable Turk and all his ways. From 1876 to 1880 the crisis was acute, and at any time war between Great Britain and Russia was possible.

During the whole of this time Mr. Gladstone was doing his utmost to counteract the evils of the Disraeli policy, and he was always in close touch

and constant communication with me. His support and unflinching championship of what he thought to be the cause of right was to me a great comfort. I was a woman in a foreign land, fighting against the prejudices that I saw everywhere about me.

In the early part of 1876 ugly rumours were afloat as to wholesale massacres of Bulgarians by the Turks. On June the 23rd there appeared in *The Daily News* a letter from its Constantinople correspondent (Mr., now Sir, Edwin Pears), and the attention of the House of Commons was directed to the appalling allegations it contained. Mr. Disraeli, then Prime Minister, treated the whole matter with airy unconcern, but the members on both sides of the House were irritated rather than soothed by his manner.

With a caution that was infinitely to his credit, for I know from our talks how deeply he felt, Mr. Gladstone waited the report of Mr. Walter Baring, the British Commissioner, which confirmed in all their revolting detail the rumours of the slaughter of harmless Bulgarians, men, women and children. Convinced that the evidence was uncontrovertible, Mr. Gladstone plunged into the fray, first by publishing his pamphlet, *The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East,* and later by urging an understanding with Russia that would render this wholesale slaughter of a Christian people impossible in future.

In Russia there was only one thought in the people's minds—war, which no human power could have prevented. The nation insisted that they

should be allowed to stand beside their co-religionists and fight in defence of their freedom.

As for myself, those were busy days. I saw around me nothing but suspicion of Russia, perhaps even of myself : but I had a noble example set me, if one were needed, by Mr. Gladstone. Ours was a fight for Christianity and civilisation. Every hour of my day and sometimes far into the night was occupied. I rushed fearlessly into print, as I have done for the last forty years when I felt that my pen might serve the purpose I had in mind. In those days editors were less hospitable towards me than they have since become. Mine was an unpopular cause, I wrote as a Russian patriot, which meant that I sometimes showed a tendency to injure British susceptibilities. " But what matter that ? " I asked myself with Jesuitical satisfaction. " The end is good, and it is the end that matters." I think there are very few of my friends in England to-day who will not echo my words.

The day on which I write these words is the Russian Flag Day, the second since the war broke out. In the streets are English and Russian girls and women selling small flags, for the most exorbitant sum they can extract from the purchasers, " to help Russia."

When I look back upon those days of gloom, when Mr. Gladstone used to come and see " the Russian agent," " the M.P. for Russia in England," and talk anxiously about the near future, and whether the storm would pass or break, it is with gratitude and expressions of heartfelt thanks to the people who have so often shown me hospitality and

in time began to listen to my words. They must have found some difficulty in avoiding the words I showered upon them; for I frankly confess I lost no opportunity of "rushing into print."

CHAPTER II

THE AWAKENING OF RUSSIA

A New Era—My Brother Nicholas—Hadji Ghiray: Hero—Terrible News—A Heroic Advance—My Brother's Death—Aksakoff's Famous Speech—Russia Aflame—A Nation's Sacrifice—My Heart-broken Letters—Mr. Gladstone's Response—Mutual Suspicion—My Visits to England

IT is not only easy, but delightful at this moment to write in dear England about Russia and Russians, about our institutions and customs, confessing even our drawbacks when they have to be explained. But, alas! some thirty or forty years ago such was not the case.

I wonder if it will interest English people to follow the life of a Russian, who, like myself, has felt the effect of these different currents.

We must remember, that, if at this moment, everything English is not only appreciated in Russia, but even enthusiastically admired, things were quite different at the time when I began writing pro-Russian articles in England.

Yes, indeed: the Russian feelings in the years '76, '77 and '78 were permeated with severe bitterness against Disraeli's English policy so hostile to Russia.

Find and study the Russian papers of these years. They will show you how all the Russian Press, and

in fact the whole country, was convinced that Turkey would never have refused to introduce the reforms asked by Russia in favour of the tortured Slavs if it had not been for England's cruel support and advice.

The whole of Russia at that time was seething with indignation and resentment.

In the year 1876 in all our papers, and in every mouth, were variations on the same theme :

" England is the principal cause of all our sacrifices and losses. England's obedient slave, Turkey, refuses all our most legitimate demands in favour of our co-religionists, our brethren by race. Turkey's insolent opposition is England's doing. Besides, the Russian Government hesitated to present her Ultimatum to the Sultan—not being prepared for war."

And so it really was. Russia then was as pacific and unprepared for fighting as she was at the beginning of the present gigantic Armageddon. Russia imagined that everybody understood that she was not coveting new acquisitions, and was quite unprepared for war, which was true enough—indeed she seemed as if she never cared to be prepared. She lived in a fool's Paradise, insisting on universal peace as at The Hague Conference, and as if the whole world were composed of " the friends " (better known as " Quakers ").

The present diabolical war has taught us many good lessons, including the necessity for prudence in the future. It will also teach us to develop our own endless resources without depending on foreign help, which is always paid for not only at usual,

but at monstrous prices, such as those which now exist at Petrograd and Moscow.

But hostile as Russia was in 1876 to any kind of war, yet, when the Balkan troubles commenced, crowds of poor Russians, preferring death to peace at any price, rushed to that country, concealing even from their relatives and friends their determination to support the Slavs, notwithstanding the complete unpreparedness of the latter. That was perhaps pure folly on the part of our volunteers, but a sublime and heroic folly, of which we are now proud. At that time, however, I, at all events (in spite of all) only felt the bitterness of indignation and despair with our Government and with England's policy.

My brother, Nicholas, as a member of the Slavonic Benevolent Society, went to Belgrade, Sofia and Cettingje. But he went armed only with money collected for ambulances and for the establishment of medical depôts, where medical aid could be obtained. The insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina was already spreading, and no preparations had been made. The helplessness of the wretched Balkan Slavs was simply appalling. As Nicholas had distributed all the money entrusted to him, and had sent in all his accounts to the Benevolent S. Society to the last copeck, our brother Alexander and I expected his speedy return to Russia.

In fact, I had Alexander's letter in my pocket, where he spoke of Nicholas' splendid business-like arrangement, when I read in all the papers a short but terrible telegram: "Hadji Ghiray is killed at Zaitcher"—it was Nicholas Kiréeff. He had joined

the Serbians under an assumed name, as we later discovered.

My horror at this news was indescribable. I could not believe it. But it was soon followed by a wire from Alexander which said: "The Emperor has sent for me and informed me of our brother's death. He allows me to go to you at once, and we will go to see Mother in Italy. She must be now at Lucca, and probably knows nothing as yet of our misfortune."

I shall hope to be forgiven for quoting Kinglake's account of my brother's sacrifice. It was characteristically Russian in its Quixotism:

"The young Nichol . . . Kiréeff was a noble, and being by nature a man of an enthusiastic disposition, with the romantic example before him in the life of his father, he had accustomed himself to the idea of self-sacrifice. Upon the outbreak of Prince Milan's insurrection, he went off to Servia with the design of acting simply under the banner of the Red Cross, and had already entered upon his humane task, when he found himself called upon by General Tchernaieff to accept the command of what we may call a brigade—a force of some five thousand infantry, consisting of volunteers and militiamen, supported, it seems, by five guns; and before long, he not only had to take his brigade into action, but to use it as the means of assailing an entrenched position at Rakovitz. Young Kiréeff very well understood that the irregular force entrusted to him was far from being one that could be commanded in the hour of battle by taking a look with a field-glass and uttering a few words to an aide-de-camp; so

NICOLAS KIRTEFF

he determined to carry forward his men by the simple and primitive expedient of personally advancing in front of them. He was a man of great stature, with extraordinary beauty of features, and, whether owing to the midsummer heat, or from any wild, martyr-like, or dare-devil impulse, he chose, as he had done from the first, to be clothed altogether in white. Whilst advancing in front of his troops against the Turkish battery he was struck—first by a shot passing through his left arm, then presently by another one which struck him in the neck, and then again by yet another one which shattered his right hand and forced him to drop his sword; but, despite all these wounds, he was still continuing his resolute advance, when a fourth shot passed through his lungs, and brought him, at length, to the ground, yet did not prevent him from uttering—although with great effort—the cry of 'Forward! Forward!' A fifth shot, however, fired low, passed through the fallen chief's heart and quenched his gallant spirit. The brigade he had commanded fell back, and his body—vainly asked for soon afterwards by General Tchernaieff—remained in the hands of the Turks."[1]

I saw it stated in the newspapers a short time back that a German officer and some hundred and fifty men had surrendered to the British, stating that he and his men would probably be of more use to Germany alive than dead. When I think of the tragedy surrounding the death of my brother, Nicholas Kiréeff, I can now see that he served Russia better by his death than he could by living for her.

The news of his heroic fall passed from one end

[1] *The Invasion of the Crimea.* Sixth edition.

of Russia to the other like the notes of a bugle calling an army into being. But for his death my own humble efforts to bring about a better understanding between two great nations might possibly never have been attempted. There is probably no evil out of which good cannot be formed.

The effect of my brother's death was instantaneous and electrical. He was the first Russian volunteer to fall in the cause of freedom, the cause that people in Great Britain could not or would not understand. Officers and men of the Russian army clamoured to go to the front. By giving his life freely for the sake of his conscience, my brother was the instrument of Russia doing one of the finest things that any nation has ever done.

Kinglake has written:

"It may be that the grandeur of the young colonel's form and stature, and the sight of the blood, showing vividly on his white attire, added something extraneous and weird to the sentiment which might well be inspired by witnessing his personal heroism . . . but, be that as it may, the actual result was that accounts of the incident—accounts growing every day more and more marvellous—flew so swiftly from city to city, from village to village, that before seven days had passed, the smouldering fire of Russian enthusiasm leapt up into a dangerous flame. Under countless green domes, big and small, priests fiercely chanting the 'Requiem' for a young hero's soul, and setting forth the glory of dying in defence of 'syn-orthodox' brethren, drew warlike responses from men who—whilst still in cathedral or church—cried aloud that they, too, would go where the young

Kiréeff had gone; and so many of them hastened to keep their word, that before long a flood of volunteers from many parts of Russia was pouring fast into Belgrade. To sustain the once kindled enthusiasm apt means were taken. The simple photograph, representing the young Kiréeff's noble features, soon expanded to large-sized portraits; and Fable then springing forward in the Path of Truth, but transcending it with the swiftness of our modern appliances, there was constituted in a strangely short time one of those stirring legends which used to be the growth of long years—a legend half warlike, half superstitious, which exalted its really tall hero to the dimensions of a giant, and showed him piling up hecatombs by a mighty slaughter of Turks."[1]

The death of Nicholas Kiréeff was a kind of spark falling on a train of gunpowder. In a month's time the whole of Russia was roused.

"The news of the death of Nicholas Kiréeff," said Aksakoff, in one of his most famous speeches, "at once stimulated hundreds to become volunteers —an event that repeated itself when the news was received of the deaths of further Russian volunteers. Death did not frighten, but, as it were, attracted them. At the beginning of the movement the volunteers were men who had belonged to the army, and chiefly from among the nobles. I remember the feeling of real emotion which I experienced when the first sergeant came requesting me to send him to Servia—so new to me was the existence of such a feeling in the ranks of the people. This feeling soon grew in intensity when, not only old soldiers,

[1] *The Invasion of the Crimea.* Sixth edition.

but even peasants, came to me with the same request. And how humbly did they persevere in their petition, as if begging alms! With tears they begged me, on their knees, to send them to the field of battle. Such petitions of the peasants were mostly granted, and you should have seen their joy at the announcement of the decision! However, those scenes became so frequent, and business increased to such an extent, that it was quite impossible to watch the expression of popular feeling, or to inquire into particulars from the volunteers as to their motives. 'I have resolved to die for my Faith.' 'My heart burns.' 'I want to help our brethren.' 'Our people are being killed.' Such were the brief answers which were given with great sincerity. I repeat there was not, and could not be, any mercenary motive on the part of the volunteers. I, at least, conscientiously warned every one of the hard lot awaiting him. Privations, wounds, and death were all that these volunteers could expect for themselves, but they rightly guessed that sooner or later the official Russian army would take up their cause."

In less than a month after my brother's death 75 officers of the Imperial Guards at Petrograd resigned their commission in the army, and hurried to Serbia; 120 officers at Moscow and Southern Russia did the same.

The impartial British Ambassador, Lord Augustus Loftus, informed his Government that according to private information 20,000 Cossacks were going to the Balkans in disguise. He also communicated the following characteristic letter:

"Even women, old men, and children speak of nothing but the Slavonic war. The warlike spirit of the Cossacks is on fire, and from small to great they all await permission to fall on the Turks like a whirlwind. At many of the settlements the Cossacks are getting their arms ready, with a full conviction that in a few days the order will be given to fall on the enemies of the Holy Faith and of their Slav brethren. There is at the same time a general murmuring against diplomacy for its dilatoriness in coming to the rescue. Deputies have arrived from many of the Cossack settlements to represent to the Ataman that the Cossacks are no longer able to stand the extermination of the Christians."

Lord Augustus Loftus reluctantly admitted that "neither the Emperor nor Prince Gortschakoff are now able to resist the unanimous appeal of the nation for intervention to protect and save their co-religionists." At that time Russia knew perfectly well that nobody outside her realms cared to share her sacrifices and her work, and that the greatest part of England even threatened her with war—an eventuality which certainly could not be contemplated with indifference.

The tragedy at Zaitschar had lighted a flame that spread throughout the length of Russia. Enormous sums of money were offered with reckless generosity. Foreigners who witnessed the enthusiasm of the movement were astonished. They did not understand the romantic chivalry of the Russian nature. Ivan Aksakoff, the President of the Benevolent Slav Society in Moscow, alone collected more than a million roubles, and everywhere Red Cross Societies

sprang up with a suddenness that was amazing. I belonged to the Moscow Red Cross Committee. It was one of our duties to collect money and material for ambulance work. I recollect vividly, although forty years have since passed, how people of all sorts and conditions came to us with their offerings. Women of fashion tendered their jewels, paupers their copper coins. Everybody gave what he could.

I could write volumes about what occurred in those glorious yet tragic days. Everywhere I encountered examples of a deep religious enthusiasm that seemed to animate the whole country, irrespective of class; yet the foreign Press saw in this spontaneous movement only a sham engineered for political purposes.

The years '76 and '77 formed a grand page of Russian history—years of real crusade in our prosaic, materialistic nineteenth century. The crowds of Russians who rushed to meet almost certain death in heroic defence of their oppressed and unarmed Christian brethren in the East, the vast sums of money, offered with spontaneous and reckless generosity, astonished all those foreigners who witnessed the marvellous enthusiasm of that movement.

This enthusiasm in Russia was the first direct result of my dear brother's death; but there was another. I was prostrated with grief by the shock. To my distraught mind England was responsible for the tragedy. Had she not encouraged the Turk there would have been no war and my brother would have been alive. If Mr. Gladstone had been in power, my brother would not have been sacrificed. How bitterly I upbraided England in my own mind.

As soon as I was well enough and influenced by all that I had read in our Press about England's interference with Russia's humane policy, and also by my personal passionate grief, I simply lost my head. Can it be believed that I wrote to my English friends in these very words : " It is England who has killed my brother. It is England who prevents our Government from helping our brethren in the Balkans. Russia was in duty bound to remonstrate with the Sultan, even to the extent of threatening him with war, the moment his massacres began. Impulsively Russian volunteers rushed to the rescue, and my poor brother Nicholas happened to be the first amongst them. He would not have been the first hero to be killed at the head of the unarmed Serbian troops, if those had been enrolled as official soldiers, well-armed and ready for battle."

Such letters can be written only, as this was, in moments of real despair. But I must gratefully add that my English correspondents understood my grief, and that people like Lord Napier, Froude, Kinglake, Freeman, Charles Villiers, Sir William Harcourt and others—then known to me rather as clever and pleasant conversationalists—all answered me with extreme kindness and sympathy. They assured me that Disraeli's policy in Turkey was wrong, that Parliament intended to question it, that *The Daily News* and other papers had already started the campaign, etc., etc. Yes, I felt their kindness, but the only person who left my letter unanswered was Mr. Gladstone, and this rather grieved me. In fact, I expected that he would have been the first to respond, as we had

understood each other so well on the old Catholic movement.

Two or three weeks later, however, I received a communication from Mrs. Gladstone, which read :

DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,

My husband, overwhelmed at this moment with business, wishes me to write and express to you our sincere sympathy with you in your great loss ; indeed we know what it is to lose a precious brother, and we also know as you do how to rejoice in a beautiful unselfish life being crowned with joy eternal. You will ere this have read the answer to your question as to Bulgaria in my husband's pamphlet in the newspapers. England is at length roused from her lethargy ; indeed it is terrible what has been going on. Once more assuring you of our heartfelt sympathy in your sorrow, believe me, yours very sincerely,

CATHERINE GLADSTONE.

I could not at the moment understand what she meant, but I was soon enlightened by the appearance of the celebrated pamphlet on the Bulgarian horrors.

Although all the letters I received were deeply sympathetic, I could see that the sympathy expressed was with me personally rather than with the cause I had so much at heart ; for how can anyone sympathise with what they do not understand ?

Great Britain suspected Russia as if it were the most natural thing in the world to do so, whilst Russia reciprocated by suspecting Great Britain. Each put the worst possible construction upon the

MYSELF IN 1876

acts of the other. Seeing this, I decided to do all I could in my humble and unpretentious way to further a better understanding between the two nations. I remembered the fable of the mouse and the lion, and that was the beginning of forty years' work, during which I have never once wandered from the path I had chosen.

There is in the little kingdom of Serbia a village situated near the place where Nicholas Kiréeff fell, named Kireevo in his honour. My brother Alexander, who was present at the ceremony of naming the village, was deeply impressed by its fervour and the gratitude shown to a Russian hero. Whatever good I have been able to do I always regard as an offering upon the grave of my brother Nicholas.

An intense craving came over me to explain to all my friends the Russian public opinion's ground for accusing England of responsibility for our mishaps in the Balkans and for the tardy declaration of war by our Government. (All the telegrams and letters referring to these terrible years have been duly collected by me and given to the Roumiantzoff Museum in Moscow. Certain documents and letters belong to history and must not perish with our death.) Let me give some further details about what I (unsupported, unprotected, ignorant as I felt myself to be) returned to face on my arrival in England. Those visits to England, by the by, did not extend at first over a couple of months, my family duties naturally taking me always back to Russia. I never like to speak too much of myself, but I think I am in honour bound to explain to all those who showed me their sympathetic

support that, after all, my only object was to do my very best and in that way, to a certain extent, deserve their support and sympathy.

My plan was a very simple one : to let England know real Russians and Russian views, and to let Russia know England and English views.

CHAPTER III

MR. GLADSTONE AND I STRIVE FOR PEACE

The Real England—The St. James's Hall Meeting—Remarkable Enthusiasm—Mr. Gladstone's Speech—He Escorts me Home—Newspaper Comment—Lord Salisbury and General Ignatieff—Mutual Regard—The Turks Displeased—An Embarrassing Tribute—The End of the Constantinople Conference—Mr. Gladstone Compromised—War Declared—"What Will England Do?"—Bismarck's Policy—Prince Gortschakoff's Opinion

ENGLAND'S attitude towards Russia had been frankly hostile: but a revulsion of feeling soon set in. I had always maintained that the real England was represented by Mr. Gladstone and not Mr. Disraeli. The first sign came from the north, and meetings of protest were held in different large towns, the upshot of which was the calling of a National Conference on non-party terms. Many of the most distinguished men in the country heartily supported the idea, and a great meeting was arranged to be held in the old St. James's Hall on November 27, 1876.

I was present during the whole conference, to which I received ten separate invitations. The enthusiasm was tremendous throughout the proceedings: but when Mr. Gladstone rose to speak he received an ovation, and it was some minutes before the uproar subsided sufficiently to allow of his being heard. I was thrilled as I had never been thrilled

before. The speech was a magnificent effort and I need not describe it here. I had never before heard Mr. Gladstone speak in public, and I was glad that it should be on the subject of the downtrodden Slavs.

He spoke for upwards of an hour and a half, and when he finished there was another outburst from the audience. It was nearly eight o'clock when I rose to leave the hall. As I was slowly making my way down the staircase, pushed and buffeted by the vast throng that was pouring out of the hall, I heard my name called and I recognised Mr. Gladstone's voice. He had seen me as he, too, was making his way out, and, offering me his arm, he conducted me into the street. In spite of his having delivered a long speech and that he was due at a dinner party, he insisted on accompanying me to Claridge's, where I was staying, talking with interest and animation as we walked.

Leaving me at my door, where I strove to thank him for what he had done for Russia in striking a blow at Turkish prestige in England, he strode off to keep his appointment to dine with the Corps Diplomatique.

When he arrived it was to find himself an hour late, and half the Ambassadors to the Court of St. James's hungry and diplomatically impatient. He tendered his apologies, also for the fact that he had not had time to dress, adding, "I have just been taking Madame Novikoff home to her hotel, which caused me to be a little late."

This explanation was regarded by the diplomatists rather as adding insult to injury. To them it seemed

an indiscretion for a British politician to see to her hotel the "agent" of a foreign Power with whom relations were somewhat strained. The jingo and Turkish newspapers seized upon the incident as an admirable means of prejudicing Mr. Gladstone in the eyes of their countrymen. Thus was a simple act of courtesy on the part of an English gentleman, who happened also to be a politician, magnified into something of an international incident.

Mr. Gladstone, however, was fearless. He never did anything that he was not convinced was right, and then he faced the world with that lion-like courage that seemed to say "Come on—if you dare."

Of that memorable day I wrote soon after Mr. Gladstone's death, and although what I said has already been partly printed, it so clearly shows the fearlessness of Mr. Gladstone that I venture to quote it here.

"On more than one occasion it has happened that he has acquainted me of his intentions, the daring of which both charmed and affrighted me. But hesitation before a goal firmly resolved upon he never knew. 'God indeed he feared, and other fear had none!' So, after the famous Conference at St. James's Hall, organised under his superintendence in favour of the Orthodox Slavs in Turkey, I remarked that, in opposing thus the policy of Disraeli and the Queen, he was waging a revolution. He interrupted me: 'Quite so, that is just the word for it. But my conscience has nothing to upbraid me with, for it is pre-eminently a Christian revolution. Besides,' he went on more slowly, 'I am not

the only one who is doing so. The four thousand people who were present in the hall were almost unanimous in their adherence, and did not hesitate to express their sympathy with the noble part played by Russia in the Balkans. Did you not notice,' he asked quickly, with a slight smile, 'that the only speaker hissed by the public merited this disgrace only because he sought to prove his impartiality by declaring that he was not specially a friend of Russia? The funny thing about it,' he added, 'is that the poor orator is by no means a Russophobe. I know him personally.' I shall never forget that incident as long as I live!"

Following the Conference was the Conference of the Powers in Constantinople. When Lord Salisbury went as the British Plenipotentiary it was with a heart full of suspicion of General Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Poor Ignatieff had been the text for many journalistic sermons upon the duplicity of Russians in general, and the Russian Ambassador to Turkey in particular. He was a veritable Machiavelli, Lord Salisbury was told, who must be carefully watched.

Lord Salisbury was, however, a man given to judging for himself, and much to the chagrin of the Turks, he soon threw his suspicions aside and entered into cordial personal relations with the man whom he had been sent to circumvent.

Lord Salisbury soon discovered that underneath a bluntness that was sometimes a little disconcerting, there was a man of honour and conviction. The British plenipotentiary was a just man who recog-

nised that he had to deal with one who was too fearless to be diplomatically suave.

Soon the two men came to appreciate each other's qualities. Ignatieff told Lord Salisbury not to believe anything he told him until he had first assured himself of its truth. There is one quality in an Englishman that no one appeals to in vain, and that is his sportsmanship. Whether by accident or design, Ignatieff had struck the right note, and henceforth Lord Salisbury and he worked loyally together for peace.

The Turks were far from pleased with the course events were taking, and Lord Salisbury became extremely unpopular. Sir Edwin Pears in his fascinating book, *Forty Years in Constantinople*, has written that "Lord Salisbury may even be said to have been hooted out of the city."

He could not, however, succeed in the face of Disraeli's policy of antagonism, and the sending of a plenipotentiary to Constantinople was little more than a farce,—a sop to British public opinion.

After he left Constantinople, General (or to give him his full title Count Nicholas) Ignatieff, became Minister of the Interior, and at one time President of the Slavonic Society.

On the day of the Slavonic Saints, Cyril and Methodius, this Society generally holds its Annual Meeting, attended by from 1000 to 2000 members. On one such occasion the Ignatieffs invited me to dine at their house and to go to the meeting with them. The Countess, by the way, was as good a Slavophil as her husband. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Count made a very enthusiastic and

eloquent speech, to which we both listened attentively. Suddenly, to my great dismay and annoyance, I heard him say in a loud voice: "And here is a Russian lady who is serving our patriotic cause abroad," etc. etc.

Taken aback by this unexpected demonstration, I heartily wished myself at the Antipodes, and this wish increased when almost the entire audience surrounded me to express their effusive gratitude. It really was a terrible moment, though of course it was kindly meant. . . .

But to return to 1876. The Conference at Constantinople had broken up, I was then in Russia, and Lord Salisbury had left the city conscious of his own unpopularity. He had endeavoured to impress upon the Turks that against Russia they stood alone, that is as far as Great Britain was concerned. Abdul Hamid knew Great Britain's suspicions of Russia, and upon this he relied. The awakening came on April 24 (1877) when Russia declared war against Turkey and Great Britain remained neutral, holding a watching brief.

The public attitude towards myself at this period was one of very obvious hostility. The frank and open friendship existing between Mr. Gladstone and the "notorious agent of the Russian Embassy in London," did not pass without comment, and certain busybodies became very active. Mr. Gladstone was said to have "compromised" himself politically by writing letters to the "agent" of a foreign Power which was at the very time being threatened with war by Great Britain. It all seems very absurd now, but in those days, when public

opinion was at boiling point, it was not a matter to be treated lightly. We were accused by the Press of conspiracy.

We in Russia were constantly asking each other what would be the attitude of England. On the eve of war our newspapers ascribed to England the following plans: (1) To occupy Athens and Crete, preventing Greece by all means from rising and helping us; (2) refusal to permit Russian vessels to pass Gibraltar; (3) and occupy Constantinople if Turkey gets too great a thrashing. I confess that I was at a loss as all these suggestions were tantamount to a declaration of war against Russia. Those were days of terrible anxiety.

News of the declaration of war was received in Petrograd on April $\frac{2}{15}\frac{4}{2}$, at 2 p.m. At 5 p.m. the Moscow Douma assembled in the Hotel de Ville. There was immense enthusiasm. The Douma at once offered a million roubles and 1000 beds for the wounded. Cries were heard from different directions. "It was too little, far too little." Then it was decided to consider the sum as a simple beginning. The merchants also met together and the same thing was repeated; also a voluntary donation of a million; 160 ladies offered their services as Sisters of Charity; 100 of them having already passed their examinations. Russia seemed quite revived. "What will England do?" I wrote on that day to Mr. Gladstone. "I know what she would do if you were at the head of the Government. But as it is now—well, we'll do our duty and let happen what may."

England's decision was to do nothing—for the

present. In the meantime a great wave of feeling was passing over Russia; yet in England it appeared impossible for people to see that this was not a piece of political jobbery. When I went to Russia at the end of 1876 I despaired of peace; but hoped that the courageous stand made by Mr. Gladstone might after all prevent war.

Those were very dark and gloomy days. We in Russia were victims of all sorts of rumours as to what England intended to do, whilst in England there seemed to be a conviction that whatever Russia might do it would constitute an unfriendly act.

I have been proudly described by my brother Alexander as maintaining a splendid, although a forlorn, struggle in the interests of peace. It may have been splendid, I do not know, but it was certainly forlorn. For a woman to endeavour to keep apart two nations who seemed determined to misunderstand each other, was a folly which, had I been more versed in the ways of the political world, I might have never attempted. Out of my ignorance came my strength; for I dared to hope things at a period when hope was not 'quoted' on the political exchange.

One of the curious anomalies of the situation was that, although Bismarck's policy of getting England embroiled with Russia was not overlooked in Britain, yet everyone seemed to be doing their utmost to assist the Iron Chancellor in his designs.

It was said that Queen Victoria herself was quite aware that Germany was doing all she could to get the British Army to the East so that her hands

might be freed in the West, and the very newspapers that called most loudly for war frankly admitted their conviction that Germany had designs on Belgium.

All this puzzled me excessively. With a woman's impatience I felt that I wanted to shake the silly men who would not understand that they were being used as catspaws of the master-mind of Europe.

Bismarck was playing his game as only Bismarck could. How he must have smiled to himself! No words of mine can give the slightest idea of what I suffered in those days. I could not sleep and I could not think. My mind was in a whirl. I felt again the torture which came over me when I heard of Nicholas' death.

In February I wrote from Moscow as one almost distraught: "I would willingly give my life, a very poor gift indeed, for peace."

Soon after the St. James's Hall Conference, as I was passing through Petrograd, I made a point of seeing Prince Gortschakoff: to urge him as well as I could, to do justice to the better part of England.

I gave him as vivid a description as I could of the magnificent Conference, and of the sympathies of the real representatives of well-thinking Englishmen. That same evening, as I afterwards heard, he related to the Czar our conversation in every detail.

I remember Prince Gortschakoff observing that the British people were powerless and that Beaconsfield would hoodwink them at a moment's notice. I could only reply that I hoped not. But I insisted on rendering justice to a people who, after meet-

ing, had convinced me were as noble, as generous and true as we were ourselves.

"You are partial," the Prince said to me.

"No," I replied, "I am true."

I felt that in all Russia I was the only one who was never tired of showing the difference between these two Englands, the official England and the popular England. Thus many of my countrymen and countrywomen who favoured a rupture with "Perfidious England" were angry with me. They thought that I showed them only one side of the question, and that the whole country would yield to Disraeli.

CHAPTER IV

MR. GLADSTONE

His Last Utterance — His Fearlessness — His Opinion of *Russia and England* — Cardinal Manning's Tribute — Gladstone and the Old Catholics — The Question of Immortality — Mr. Gladstone's Remarkable Letter — A Delightful Listener — His Power of Concentration — Hayward and Gladstone — Their Discussion — Miss Helen Gladstone — We Talk Gladstone — The Old Lady's Delight — I Miss My Train

SOMEBODY once compared life to an education that can never be completed — and indeed, the more deeply one studies events and people, the more emphatically one realises how much must always remain that it is hopeless to try to understand. Nevertheless, the very contact with certain characters, even if we cannot always fathom their depths, is ennobling and edifying, and however much time may have passed since they left us to go to a better sphere, it is always good to linger over memories of great men whom we have had the privilege to meet. I hope, therefore, that I may be allowed to add in this book a few words about my friendship with Mr. Gladstone.

I have been told that the last word to fall from the lips of the great statesman several moments before his death, was "Amen." What a fitting and characteristic ending! The whole life and activity of this grand old man, indeed, reminds one of nothing

so much as of some nobly worded prayer or confession of faith. All his existence was based upon his religious ideals and convictions, which he put into practice simply and naturally in every word and action of his everyday life. Christian love and charity permeated his activities in a way that is rare indeed among public men, surrounded as they are by intrigues and rivalries and difficulties. He was generous, as only so great and noble a character can be, to the many enemies that surrounded him, supported even by Queen Victoria herself, whose sympathies were all in favour of Gladstone's opponent Beaconsfield.

Another trait in Mr. Gladstone's character, that always aroused my admiration, was the firm, unhesitating manner in which he would demolish all obstacles and, without looking to right or to left, make straight for his goal, in the face of opposition, animosity, even danger, once he had decided that the goal in question was the right one, the one pointed out by his conscience and his principles. He was entirely fearless in his opinions and convictions—he knew indeed only one fear: the fear of God. It seems to me that his courage could only be compared to his kindness, and I should like, in this connection, to mention an incident that comes to my mind, and that can surely be no secret now after so many years. It happened in the year 1884, during the great political crisis, when one heard on all sides the query: "Will he return to power?" Everyone knew very well who was meant by the word "*he.*" Just at that time I published my *Russia and England*, which cost me four years of

work and fatigue, and also some hesitation. Mr. Gladstone called with his wife to express his sympathetic approval, which he did in the most encouraging terms.

"I will write a review of your book," he said,—to which generous offer I replied protestingly, to Mrs. Gladstone's surprise and almost indignation: "No, no!" I exclaimed. "On no account! Not at this critical moment. Such a step may do you much harm. Besides, in these emotional times, English people will never read my book at all!"

In answer, Mr. Gladstone struck his hand angrily on the table, "I will compel them to read it," he said in a determined voice. "Every Englishman should not only read but *study* it!"

And truly enough, in spite of my remonstrances, the review was published in *The Nineteenth Century*, and contained the above recommendation to Mr. Gladstone's countrymen.

Could anyone be kinder or show greater political courage?

How the events and incidents of those exciting days linger in one's memory! It is indeed certain that I shall never forget them!

A few days after that glorious St. James's Hall meeting, there was a great reaction in public opinion. A large section of the Press began to ridicule Mr. Gladstone, calling him Gladstonoff (English people at that time, having the scantiest knowledge of things Russian, imagined that all Russian names ended in *off!*), and even insinuating that he was an agent in the Russian pay! But although one must admit that his responsibilities weighed heavily upon

him, nothing shook the courage and the determination of this dauntless English Slavophil to continue along the path he considered the right one.

Afterwards, when, at the summit of his greatness, he was for the second time re-elected Prime Minister, he wrote in his diary :

> Oh, 'tis a burden, Cromwell, 'tis a burden !
> Too heavy for a man that hopes for Heaven !

And yet, how nobly and unflinchingly did he bear that burden all through his life !

Mr. Gladstone has been discussed and appraised and honoured all the world over as a great statesman. To me, however, his supreme claim to greatness lay even beyond his genius, in his rare and irreproachable moral qualities. Cardinal Manning once remarked that Mr. Gladstone was a more fitting person to receive Holy Orders than himself. " In fact," added the Cardinal frankly, " he is as perfectly suited for the Church as I am *unsuited* for it ! "

Already in his childhood, Gladstone seems to have exercised a beneficial influence over his companions. Bishop Hamilton, famed for his many virtues, and treated by his contemporaries almost as a saint, has admitted that little Willie Gladstone saved him from many an escapade at Eton !

Much later, in 1838, Gladstone wrote his famous work, *The State in its Relations to the Church ;* in 1845 he gave up his position as chief of the Ministry in order to remain true to his religious convictions, and still later, in 1857, he opposed, with all his energy, the " Divorce Bill," on the ground of his

belief that a union consecrated by the Church cannot be broken by human law.

I will not dwell upon a fact so well known as the sensation produced by the great English statesman's pamphlet on *The Vatican*. I will only say that it was the general public, and not Mr. Gladstone's personal friends, who were so astonished at the views expounded in that pamphlet. In his own intimate circle, I constantly heard him repeat his opinion that "Roman Catholicism is the systematic tyranny of the priest over the layman, the Bishop over the priest, and the Pope over the Bishop."

Feeling in his soul, on the one hand, almost a horror of Rome, and on the other a deep religious inspiration, Mr. Gladstone's sympathy with and admiration for the great cause of the Old Catholics were almost a foregone conclusion. He first came in contact with this movement through his friend Döllinger, and he never ceased to express his confidence in its ultimate success. Whenever he spoke of the Old Catholics, and he did so very frequently, it was always to express himself about them in terms of deep sympathy and approval, as of true Christians who strive, with such inspired faith and steadfast purpose, to propagate the doctrines of the original Christian Church, robbed of all the human errors that have crept into it and are represented by the ambitious and tyrannical Papacy of the Vatican. Mr. Gladstone was one of the first subscribers to the *Revue Internationale de Théologie*, which always occupied a place of honour in his library, and which, in January, 1895, published his long letter to me on the subject of Old Catholicism

and Döllinger. This letter is reproduced in my pamphlet: *Christ or Moses? Which?*" For Döllinger, Mr. Gladstone had the warmest admiration and friendship, looking upon him as one of the most remarkable men in the contemporary Christian Church.

The following letter from Mr. Gladstone will, I think, have some interest for my readers:—

HAWARDEN CASTLE, CHESTER,
Oct. 6, 1894.

MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,

I can hardly ever write anything upon suggestion, what is more, is that I have before me continuous operations, long ago planned, and must refrain from those that are fragmentary. So I can undertake nothing new.

My interest in the Old Catholics is cordial. A sister of mine died in virtual union with them after having been Roman for over 30 years.

I remember suggesting to Dr. Döllinger that their future would probably depend in great measure upon their being able to enter into some kind of solid relations with the Eastern Church. And I earnestly hope this may go forward. Dr. Döllinger agreed in this opinion. They may do great good, and prevent the Latin Church by moral force from further Extravagances. All this you will think disheartening with reference to the object of your Letter. But I have a little more to say.

I have been drawn into writing a Preface to a Pictorial Edition of the Bible, which will probably

have a very wide circulation in America, but will be confined to English-speakers. My Preface will have no reference to that Edition, but to the Authority and Value of the Scriptures. I think there will be nothing to which you or Old Catholics would object. . . .

Believe me, sincerely yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

One of the most interesting letters I ever received from Mr. Gladstone, and one which showed his extreme kindness to me when I was in some theological difficulties, involves a story.

A very eminent and scientific friend, discussing with me some years ago the weighty question of Immortality according to the Old Testament, emphatically said :

"The Old Testament knows no Immortality! This is a fact which almost every student of theology understands perfectly well, and which, at the same time, nobody outside that class appears to have the least inkling of. The Old and New Testaments are commonly spoken and thought of as *one* book—*one* inspired work—instead of as two volumes, based on opposite and irreconcilable principles. The doctrine of the first is principally materialistic. The doctrine of the second is purely idealistic. The Old Testament represents God as Jehovah, quite otherwise than He is pictured by Jesus Christ. God, as pictured by the Jews, manifested Himself in the terrible '*Lex Talionis*,' described in Exodus xxi. 24, 25 : 'Eye for eye, burning for burning, wound for wound.' Whilst we are ordered by Jesus

Christ to 'do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.' "

I was greatly impressed by that conversation. It is obvious that once we deny immortality, we, at the same time, reject the existence of the soul. An ardent desire seized me to discuss that most important question from different points of view. I pressed my friend to sum up all his arguments and publish them to the world. After much hesitation he consented to do so, provided I took upon myself the responsibility of the publication and the distribution of his pamphlet amongst well-known professors of different European Universities.

Beyond this, a *conditio sine qua non* was my promise not to reveal his name during his lifetime. Of these stipulations the latter was, of course, the easiest; but I carefully carried out all of them. But now that he is dead I am at liberty to disclose his name. It was Count Alexander Keyserling, to whom Bismarck offered the post of Minister of Public Instruction in Germany, but which Keyserling refused.

I published, for private circulation, the German pamphlet *Unsterblichkeitslehre nach der Bibel*, and sent it to one hundred professors, including Frohschammer, Albert Réville, Treitschke, Blunschli, Aloïs Riehl, etc., etc., asking their opinion. In the great majority of cases they returned answer that the facts set forth were already well known to them, and, in fact, were generally admitted. One of the fraternity, a Roman Catholic priest, abused me roundly for dragging such a subject into public discussion.

But I bore this censure with equanimity. "*Du choc des opinions jaillit la vérité*," and the more we study and investigate questions which guide our life the better.

Since then my desire to have the question more deeply investigated has been increased greatly by the assertion of a talented and outspoken Jewish writer that Judaism, or rather its teaching, is spreading. In the August number of the *Fortnightly Review*, 1884, he says: "This virtual assumption that the limits of human knowledge can extend no farther than those of the visible world, appears to me to be the central idea of Judaism." And he further asserts: "Judaism, *the materialistic teaching*, is then found to have resulted in Judaism *the physical force*." The author finishes thus: "History will show that . . . it has been silently engaged in that further Judaisation of mankind, which is the sole ideal of its singularly practical teaching." Be it noted that the above is quoted from a panegyric of the Jewish doctrine!

Amongst those who wrote to me was Professor E. Michaud, one of the most distinguished representatives of the Old Catholic movement, and the editor of the *La Revue internationale de Théologie* (Berne, Suisse) who wrote as follows: "From a habit of detesting the Jews, people are sometimes brought to depreciate Judaism and ascribe to it almost materialistic doctrines. Judaism is certainly not Christianity; but neither is it Materialism."

Somewhat bewildered by these unexpected, and, as I think, exaggerated protests, I appealed to Mr. Gladstone, whose kindness in these matters had for

years been unfailing to me. My letter appears to have given him the mistaken impression that I was venturing on my own account into the polemical arena. Hence his reply, cautioning me against an undertaking so obviously beyond my powers.

His letter is most important, and I am glad to be able to publish so weighty a judgment on the most serious of all subjects, by the greatest Englishman of his century. Here it is :—

HOTEL CAP MARTIN, MENTONE,
Feb. 13th, 1895.

MY DEAR MADAME NOVIKOFF,

I am sorry you have not a better adviser, but I will discharge as fairly and frankly as I can the part which you desire me to undertake.

I do not see why the word "*heresy*" should be flung at you. Heresy is a very grave matter, and should not be charged except in cases where not only the subject matter is grave, but also the whole authority of the Church or Christian community has been brought to bear. I conceive, however, that the question of Jewish opinion on a future state, as opened in the Old Testament, is a question quite open to discussion.

I have myself been a good deal engaged latterly in examining the question of a future state, and have had occasion to touch more or less upon Jewish opinion. The subject is very interesting, but is also large and complex, and I would advise you as strongly as I may against publishing anything upon it without a previous examination proportioned in some degree to the character of the

subject. How can you safely enter upon it without some attention to the researches and the opinions of the writers who have examined it ?

My own state of information is by no means so advanced as to warrant the expression of confident and final conclusions. But I think there are some things that are clearly enough to be borne in mind. We cannot but notice the wise reserve with which the Creeds treat the subject of the future state. After the period when they were framed, Christian opinion came gradually, I believe, to found itself upon an assumption due to the Greek philosophy, and especially to Plato, namely, that of the natural immortality of the human soul. And this opinion (which I am not much inclined to accept) supplies us, so to speak, with spectacles through which we look back upon the Hebrew ideas conveyed in the Old Testament.

Another view of the matter is, that man was not naturally immortal, but *immortaliable*. That had he not sinned, he would have attained regularly to immortality ; but after his eating from the tree of knowledge he was prevented, as the text informs us, from feeding on the tree of life, and the subject of his immortality was thus thrown into vague and obscure distance.

I suppose it to be a reasonable opinion that there was a primitive communication of divine knowledge to man, but of this revelation we have no knowledge beyond the outline, so to call it, conveyed in the Book of Genesis. That outline, however, appears to show in the case of Enoch that one righteous man was specially saved from death ; and the words of

our Saviour in the Gospel give us to understand that there were at any rate glimpses of the future state underlying Jewish opinion. We must not, I think, forget the respect with which our Saviour treats that opinion.

Nor can we forget that the Mosaic dispensation, coming as it were upon the back of the old patriarchal religion, being essentially national, was also predominantly temporal, and tended very powerfully to throw the idea of the future state into the shade.

Nevertheless, it is, I think, generally admitted that, while in certain passages the Psalmist speaks of it either despairingly or doubtfully, in some Psalms the subject is approached with a vivid and glowing belief; as when, for example, it is said: "When I awake up after Thy likeness I shall be satisfied with it."

You know how much upon some occasions I have both sympathised with and admired your authorship. I do not dissuade you from following up the task to which you are now drawn. But I do not think you have as yet quite reached the point at which publication would do honour to yourself or justice to your theme. And I am sure this very imperfect reply will serve to show that I do not treat your letter with levity nor try wantonly to throw obstacles in your path.

I shall be interested to know what you decide about writing—with or without further study.

W. E. GLADSTONE.

P.S.—Your letter, dated 6th, reached me yesterday.

Mr. Gladstone's letter may be regarded as the first and most interesting of those authoritative opinions which it is my sole object to elicit.

People who met Gladstone at my house always found in him not only an excellent and charming listener, but also a man who was ever ready to hear new suggestions, and who delighted in original opinions or ideas that seemed worthy of closer investigation. On some occasions, he was eloquent and talkative ; at other times, quite the contrary. One afternoon, for instance, he was in the midst of arguing an interesting point with me, when he suddenly perceived on my table a catalogue of recent works on Shakespeare. It happened that he had never seen this particular catalogue before, and being an ardent Shakespeare enthusiast, the title attracted his attention. He picked up the book, approached a lamp, and began interestedly turning over the pages. Presently he sank into a chair, and having clearly quite forgotten his surroundings, was soon lost in study of his favourite literary subject.

Among my other visitors on that particular afternoon was Hayward, a well-known critic, also a dabbler in poetry and a would-be man of the world. Hayward had a great weakness for people with sounding names and assured positions, and was, of course, always more than pleased to be seen in conversation with the great Prime Minister of England. I was quite aware of this, and inwardly somewhat amused, for indeed, though myself belonging to the class patronised by Hayward, I often invited to my house people whose *present* was perhaps humble,

but whose *future* seemed to me promising. I have every sympathy and admiration for family traditions, and aristocratic manners and associations—but I have always felt that if one never comes in contact with self-made, energetic, persevering people with ideas and ideals, one is inclined to grow narrow and prejudiced. This has always particularly struck me during my visits to Vienna. The Viennese aristocracy, in spite of loud voices and a bad habit of shouting as though one were deaf, is distinguished for its graceful and charming manners. However, beyond references to ballets and to sport, punctuated by gossip about mutual friends, conversation is practically non-existent. There is only a perpetual buzz of small talk, tedious to the highest degree, and to me at least, acceptable only in homœopathic doses !

Self-made men, as I have found, always have something more interesting to say ; their characters are often worth studying, give one food for reflection, and, being a new element in society, introduce new ideas to broaden our minds. This has always been my view, and I have followed it out, often in the face of protests from my friends who urged me to be more exclusive, and who failed to understand that ideas are better than empty grandeur.

Gladstone, Froude, Kinglake, Tyndall and many others, however, fortunately shared my peculiar tastes in this matter, and perhaps this was one of the reasons why my association with them was always, as I think, pleasant for us all.

But I have made a long digression, and must return to my party.

Hayward, as I have said, was always greatly attracted by the presence of Gladstone, and made every effort to draw him into conversation. Alas, however, nothing could divert him from his book (the Shakespeare Catalogue). His answers to all Hayward's remarks were vague and monosyllabic, and only after some time did he look up and reply quite irrelevantly to some question on current events. "Strange, I have never seen this catalogue before," observed Gladstone. Hayward was indignant. "There is nothing to see," he grumbled testily, "it is only a list of reprints, and an incomplete list at that."

"No, no," remonstrated Gladstone enthusiastically, "that is just the charm of it—there really seems to be nothing missing."

"Oh, yes," objected Hayward angrily, "there are many things missing. I know all the Shakespearean literature as well as anyone. I can show you at once."

"Oh, but show me, show me," exclaimed Gladstone, highly interested.

Hayward took the volume somewhat resentfully, and it was now his turn to lose himself in its pages, while Gladstone waited in silence, and my remaining visitors looked at me almost in distress! The incident ended as unexpectedly as it began. After having almost quarrelled with Hayward about some published or unpublished works, Gladstone suddenly remembered that he had promised Mrs. Gladstone to be back at a certain hour, rose hurriedly, and took his leave. I was exceedingly amused; not so, however, my remaining guests.

"You can hardly say that these manners are good!" remarked someone to me. "Well," I answered, "I never find fault with my friends. Besides, is it not natural that an Englishman should be carried away with enthusiasm for your great English genius Shakespeare, who is honoured all the world over?"

This was not the only occasion on which I remarked that Gladstone had an almost morbid love of books. In Russia, we had only one man who was a match for the great English Premier in this respect: this was the head of our Holy Synod, Pobyedonostzeff. I used to send new books that I came across to both these friends, but I confess that I seldom had the satisfaction to find that my gifts were not already known to them.

Pobyedonostzeff being, of course, incessantly busy and in demand, and rarely having a moment to himself, would on receiving a new book that interested him, take a train from Petrograd to Moscow, and back in order to enjoy some hours of solitude and the possibility of reading his book undisturbed during this improvised journey!

Another of my book-lover friends who has left so warm an impression in my remembrance, and whose name comes to my mind as I write, is Tyndall. How good and kind-hearted he always was, and how responsive and eager to do good and to help others!

As I have said, Mr. Gladstone was greatly interested in the Old Catholics. On one occasion when we were both dining with Dr. Döllinger, one of the leaders of the Old Catholic movement, at

Munich, we were discussing the Old Catholicism and Mr. Gladstone repeated how greatly interested he was in the movement. I remember the way in which he spoke to me afterwards of his sister in connection with the Old Catholic question. I thought it only natural to tell him that, as I should pass Cologne on my way to Russia, I would like to call on her. Mr. Gladstone's face brightened at my suggestion.

When I called on Miss Helen Gladstone I found that she already expected my visit, and had heard a great deal not only about me, but about the Old Catholic question.

"Yes," she said, "my brother is quite a superior man. But if you knew what an original he is! For instance, once when he was travelling abroad already in his capacity of Prime Minister, his wife desired him to take a drive and off they went. But what vehicle do you think they took? A little one-horsed cart, just as if they were two paupers sent on some business!"

"Don't you think it is natural," said I, "for a man like Mr. Gladstone, who has so many grand ideas and splendid schemes, to pay no attention to the trivialities of this conventional world? Let me tell you what happened to us once, when the Gladstones and myself met at Munich. We went to a Museum, the President of which was very anxious to make the 'honneurs' of some very rare specimens. He showed us a certain dish, and seemed particularly proud of it. Your brother took it in his hand, examined it very carefully, and then said: 'But you know, Professor, this is not genuine. In

a genuine dish there would be here a special little mark that is not to be found here.' The President actually turned pale—would you believe it ? "

Dear Miss Gladstone seemed quite charmed with this story. " Oh, how like him ! " she exclaimed. " He knows everything. But you promised to tell me something more about him," she pressed.

" Well," I said, " my second recollection refers to our meeting in Paris. When I arrived there the celebrated politician and journalist, Emile de Girardin, asked me to a large dinner party that he was giving. A few days before this event, I heard of the Gladstones' arrival in Paris and mentioned it to Monsieur de Girardin, with the suggestion how nice it would be if he were to invite them also. My old Frenchman was delighted. ' Oh, do try to arrange that ! ' he exclaimed ; ' I do not know them personally, but have always longed to make their acquaintance. I shall send you the list of all my guests, and hope you will try to ascertain whom they would like to meet, and whom to avoid.' This was an easy task, and I fulfilled it. Mr. Gladstone said : ' I would very much like to meet your brother, General Kiréeff (who had already been invited), and the Contributor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Scherer '—(Scherer was a celebrated senator, politician and literary critic). It so happened that by chance I knew some of his work, and was delighted at the prospect of this meeting. But Mr. Gladstone frankly admitted that he would not like to meet Gambetta. This desire was also observed at the end of the dinner ; one of the guests addressed a long speech of welcome to Mr. Gladstone, of course in

French. But just fancy my surprise, when Mr. Gladstone rose and answered, also in French, to the delight of the whole assembly. No one had suspected that he possessed such a mastery of the French language. As to my brother, who took Miss Helen Gladstone in to dinner, they turned out to be both great admirers of Botticelli and well agreed on their favourite subject."

Dear old Miss Gladstone seemed delighted with all these details about her relations, and pressed me to prolong my visit, which I did to the point of losing my train!

CHAPTER V

SOME SOCIAL MEMORIES

My Thursdays in Russia—Khalil Pasha's Death—Lord Napier and the Lady-in-Waiting—Madame Volnys—My Parents-in-law's *ménage*—An Exceptional Type—Prince Vladimir Dolgorouki's Embarrassment—The Grand Duchess Helen—A Brilliant Woman—The Emperor's Enjoyment—The Campbell-Bannermans—A Royal Diplomatist—Mark Twain on Couriers—In Serious Vein—Verestchagin—"The Retreat from Moscow"—The Kaiser's Remarkable Utterance

I MUST say I was very fortunate with my Thursday receptions in Russia. In the first place, my husband, who was not particularly fond of singing or playing, never opposed either. Diplomatists like Lord Napier, the English Ambassador at Petrograd, and the Turk, Khalil Pasha, Turkish Ambassador (but brought up in France and devoted to French theatres), also used to come and be as silent as mice if music was already going on. That poor Khalil had a very dramatic end. He returned to Constantinople, as he thought, for a short time, but fell ill. His European doctors insisted on an immediate cure at Carlsbad, but his Sultan, for some reason unknown to me, opposed his leaving Turkey. The poor man died mysteriously, and his enormous wealth as mysteriously disappeared.

At one of my little receptions there happened a

very disagreeable duel between Lord Napier and a lady-in-waiting belonging to the Court of the Grand Duchess Helen. She was the sister of an ambassador, with whom, however, she was not on very affectionate terms. Undoubtedly pretty, she was occasionally rude and almost ill-bred. On seeing him, Mademoiselle de —— exclaimed: "Lord Napier, I spent last evening at the Winter Palace with old Countess Bludoff. We talked of you and laughed very much."

I felt simply horrified at that speech, but Napier remained quite self-possessed.

"I know," said he, "you were asked there to be shown to my new secretary, Mitford." Here, fortunately, the dialogue was interrupted by Rubinstein, who started a sonata. A fortunate interruption!

Soon after that in came Madame Volnys, the celebrated French actress, who promised to give us some scenes of Molière's *Tartuffe*, which she did to perfection.

Madame Volnys was a remarkable woman, not only possessing great histrionic talent, but also very superior character. She lost her only child, whom she adored. This brought her into contact with our Empress Marie Alexandrovna (very particular in her choice of associates), the consort of our "Emperor Liberatas," who used to invite her to the Palace as her lecturer fairly often.

In the same year something quite unexpected happened to me. My husband's parents, very old people, but who had never been abroad, suddenly decided to go to Paris, and I was asked to join them

later on. Off they went, after having paid us in Petrograd a visit of two or three weeks. They travelled in quite exceptional comfort. They had a lady travelling-companion, my mother-in-law had her maid, my father-in-law his valet, and to crown all there was a Russian cook, whom my mother-in-law declared to be far superior to any foreigner, including even the French. Whatever my mother-in-law declared was law to the whole family, not only to her docile husband and her two sons, but to her two daughters-in-law, and anybody coming to her house.

I remember one day my brother-in-law, who was already Ambassador at Vienna, and my husband, who at that time was a lieutenant-general attached to the Grand Duke Nicolas, father of the present head of our troops, were sitting and talking together. Their mother entered the room and they both got up and stood until she told them to sit down again.

My mother-in-law was an exceptional type. She was the daughter of Prince Vladimir Dolgorouki, the poet, and tremendously proud of her origin, but in Russia all the princes Dolgorouki descended from Rurick, who came to Russia in the ninth century, and having all the same origin are surely fairly equal. But such was not my mother-in-law's idea, and she once upbraided the governor-general of Moscow, having the same name as her own, for belonging to the younger branch. The poor man looked very much embarrassed.

Another pleasant memory is that of the Grand Duchess Helen. A woman who loses her youth,

beauty and gaiety, and remains in possession only of her immortal soul, may naturally expect to be forgotten by her so-called "friends." But a Russian Grand Duchess enjoying an exceptionally high position, with palaces and a numerous court at her disposal, is a privileged person. No need for her to "request the favour" of So-and-so's company to tea, dinner or reception. She dictates her list, including the names of wits, artists or ministers, whose attendance she desires. The courier transmits her orders, and the guests arrive. *Voilà tout!*

Permission to attend service in Palace private chapels is generally received through a lady-in-waiting or the "Grande Maîtresse"—as, at least, I know from personal experience.

The dear Grand Duchess Helen remained to the last day of her life, to me, always brilliant and clever, and I was sincerely attached to her.

I shall never forget, however, the difficulty I had to execute one of her orders. She was giving a ball to their Majesties, at which, punctually at midnight, dominoes were to appear in a prearranged set. I was asked to secure these mysterious apparitions. But this proved a far from easy task. For not only had I to find ladies who were witty, amusing and sprightly, but also those who would be willing to deprive themselves of being seen as invited guests, in order to pass through the rooms as apparitions—carefully masked.

Now one of my candidates had the misfortune to possess very ugly prominent egg-like eyes, "but" —thought I—"there is the mask, it will conceal all sorts of imperfections." Nevertheless, I thought

it prudent to warn her. "Remember," said I, "the orders are that identity must be *strictly* concealed."

"Oh, that is quite impossible in my case," she proudly replied, "for my bright and almost oriental eyes are well known and would certainly be recognised by everyone."

So I dropped the oriental-eyed creature and secured a substitute.

The Emperor assured his aunt afterwards that he had greatly enjoyed her party.

The Grand Duchess, as well as her other nephew —the Grand Duke Constantine Nicolaevitch—was devoted to the Emperor's reforms, especially to his scheme concerning the abolition of Serfdom in Russia. That plan, no doubt, was of tremendous magnitude. It not only granted personal freedom to forty-eight millions of serfs, but half the number of them had to become freeholders.

That reform, by the by, was carried out in two years' time. Was it not a miraculous rapidity?

There was another detail of this measure, which was really a very noble and grand one; we, the nobility of all the country, have lost, through that measure, nearly half of all we possessed. An important fact, no doubt, but I never heard any indignation, protest or murmur evoked by that change. Everybody felt its urgency, and a feeling of justice prevailed with all the others.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was very much interested in that question, and plied me with many questions. Not being able to satisfy his curiosity during our meetings at Carlsbad, I promised to

procure from Russia the desired information, and did so eventually on my arrival at London.

It was at the Grand Duchess Helen's villa at Carlsbad, where we were invited every evening during her stay, that I met the Campbell-Bannermans for the first time. Those were immensely interesting evenings, when one met only people worth knowing.

One of the charming characteristics of these gatherings was their unpretentiousness and simplicity. Many of the guests were invalids, melancholy slaves to all sorts of hygienic regulations. Fortunately, I was not one of these, and could enjoy my moral food as well as the beautiful fruit that the rest of the world could only contemplate. My friend, Count Alexander Keyserling, was attached to the Grand Duchess Helen's court during her foreign trip of that year, and he alone could make any gathering most interesting.

Before leaving Carlsbad, the Campbell-Bannermans insisted upon my promising to see them often in London, and they soon became a new attraction for me during my stays in England.

The first years of my travels, my winter visits to London were of very short duration—but dear England grows upon one, and little by little my sojourns extended themselves from October till May.

Few people have left me such dear memories as Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and his wife. I visited them in their English country house, but never in Scotland, as I was always afraid of being too much carried away from my work, which required unremitting perseverance and study.

Contrary to what often happened to me, I liked them both almost equally, though dear Lady C.-B.'s moral qualities prevailed over her physical charms. She had excellent qualities, greatly appreciated by her husband and her friends. Thus, for instance, she knew her Blue Books almost better than did her husband, and when the conversation turned on some particular events with dates and detail she could surpass everybody with her memory. I must add that both husband and wife were very hospitable, and I was allowed, no, even pressed, to lunch with them whenever I liked. I did so fairly often on Sundays, as I frequently wanted Sir Henry's advice on different subjects, and this he never failed to give. More than once I said to him : " I recognise your wisdom and your prudence in all you say and do, I feel sure the day will come when you will be Prime Minister."

Though I am neither a clairvoyante nor a prophetess—still, my prophecy turned out to be true. He always (was it simply out of modesty ?) denied the possibility of such a happening. But I was right after all, and he was wrong.

To be with Sir Henry was always a particular pleasure to me. It was such a delight to see a man so staunch to his principles, so firm with people about him, and so kind to those depending on him.

He certainly, *pace* Sydney Smith, appreciated a joke. We were talking one day about the head of a Royal House. I related how I, along with some diplomatists, was presented to the Court in question.

" I think I am right," said the Royal Hostess, to

one of the latter, smiling graciously, "you are the successor of your predecessor?" He bowed very deeply, and seemed quite pleased with that platitude. I was somewhat taken aback and rather amused, but when the reception was over, a lady-in-waiting said to me: "Is not Her Highness admirably clever and gracious? How well she talks!" Court people are sometimes very easily pleased. I did not commit myself to much admiration!

Sir Henry was greatly amused at the story.

The last time I saw Sir Henry and had a long talk with him, was when he dined with me after his return from France. He came to meet the Russian Ambassador on the 23rd of January.

"Do you know," I said, "people assure me that you are going to the House of Lords. I am rather surprised to hear it," I added frankly. But he simply ridiculed the idea of such a step.

"You are quite right in being sceptical," he said. "I love my work, and I am not going to lay it down." That was the last time he dined out. He made a further brief appearance in the House of Commons, but it speedily became evident that his days were numbered. Still, he clung to the hope that he would regain strength. His colleagues, Mr. Asquith in particular, did everything a man could to ease his burden.

Doctors declared that dropsy had set in as the result of heart weakness. But his courage was unabated, and his faith undimmed. My impression is that his wife's death undoubtedly accelerated his own end. Strange reports have been spread about his last days. People who were allowed to watch

around his bed heard the dying man speak from time to time, as of old, to the life-long companion of all his joys and sorrows, his beloved wife, as if she were present before him, and that he would soon rejoin her in the land of another life.

Tennyson had the same experience with his son Lionel. If these visions are actually granted, would it not be a great consolation and a reward for deep affection ?

In those days I had many friends who possessed very little in common with each other. Carlyle and Froude would sometimes call on me, but generally when I was likely to be alone. To me Carlyle showed only the lovable and affectionate side of his nature. He was a dear old man, and I loved nothing better than to see opposite me his rugged old face, and hear his broad Scots accent.

When the publication in book form of my articles was under discussion, he said, " You must publish all your articles."

" But who will write a preface ? " I enquired. " Will you do so ? " The dear old man shook his head dolefully, and, looking at his trembling hand, said :

" I could not, I am too old, but here is a young man "—and he looked at Froude who was with him. " He can do it."

Froude protested very gallantly that my articles did not require a preface, but nevertheless he most kindly wrote one which, no doubt, induced a large number of people to make themselves acquainted with my views.

Carlyle and I had one great thing in common :

SEMINARY FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS BUILT BY ALEXANDER NOVIKOFF AT NOVO-ALEXANDROFKA

our distrust of Disraeli and our sympathy with the oppressed Slavs. In 1878, when the jingoes were shouting their loudest over the Russian Mission to Afghanistan, which had precipitated the Afghan War, Carlyle referred to politics as "a sore subject nowadays with our damnable premier," as he called him.

He was always generous with regard to the humble efforts of the "Rooshian Leddy" as he called me. He knew that whatever my literary shortcomings I was sincere, and that was the one golden key to dear old Carlyle's heart.

When death came within sight, almost within touch, he regarded it not as an enemy but rather as a magician who was to open to him a new world of wonder. It might almost be said that he went part of the way to meet it. We, his friends, were always being thrilled by false alarms. One day, two and a half years before his death, he solemnly warned those about him of his approaching death.

I recall on another occasion I was told the end was very near; the next I heard was that he was as devoted as ever to his omnibus rides. In those days one never knew whether Carlyle were dying or riding in an omnibus.

When two years later the end was slowly approaching, I refrained from going to see him, thinking it a greater act of friendship to remain away rather than to make any claim upon his fast-ebbing vitality. I was deeply touched when he enquired of those about him: "Why does not Madame Novikoff come to see me?"

I went and found him very weak, but genuinely

glad to see me. He talked slowly and carefully, showing that the breaking-up of the body had in no way affected his magnificent mind. I remember his complaining to me that Froude wanted him to correct proofs on his death-bed; but that he had refused!

I am not what would be described as emotional, having perhaps more than the average amount of control over myself; but I felt at the bedside of that dear old man that I could not keep my self-possession.

His last words to me were:

"Ay, ay, when you come back here (from Russia) you will not find me alive."

As to my other old friends, like Kinglake, Froude, Charles Villiers and Count Béust—who were, in fact, my daily visitors—I need not more than mention their names, having written of them so fully elsewhere.

Among the many interesting personalities whom I have at various times met, there comes to my mind the remembrance of Mark Twain. The society of the great American humorist was always greatly sought after—a very natural circumstance—for, unlike many famous wits who keep all their brilliancy exclusively at the points of their pens, Mark Twain was sociable and talkative and seemed to have an inexhaustible supply of delightful anecdotes, ever ready and at the disposition of his friends. He called on me one day, and, speaking of his approaching departure on some pleasure trip with his wife and two daughters, remarked with a humorous twinkle in his eye:

"It is fortunate that we have no courier to make a muddle with our tickets——"

"Why should couriers make muddles?" I asked. "Have you had tragic experiences of that kind?"

"Not personally," he answered; "but there was a millionaire who travelled with all his huge family, the kind of family that is described in the Old Testament. They gave themselves great airs, and of course arrived at the station one minute before the departure of the train, having left everything to their courier. The latter, however, had evidently been otherwise occupied, and was late too, arriving almost at the same moment as the family.

"'How late you are!' shouted the irate millionaire. 'Give me the tickets—quick!' The courier, in great haste, fumbled nervously among a confusion of papers in his pocket-book, and thrust into his employer's hand a packet of tickets. The engine was already getting up steam, and there was not a moment to be lost. My poor friend passed the packet on to a guard and asked excitedly for his reserved carriage, only to receive in reply a questioning stare. Alas! The tickets turned out to be of little use on the railway, for they were—concert tickets! The courier, you see, was a singer, and had been thinking too much about his own affairs!"

Mark Twain often amused his hearers by describing in the most humorous manner his own past jokes.

"Some time ago," he told me on one occasion, "everyone went mad about table turning! I wrote a long article on the subject, but in spite of the remonstrances of my publisher, refused to sign it.

"Don't you see?" he added, "I wanted to be

taken seriously—had I disclosed my identity, everyone would have taken all I said for a joke!"

So there is something in a name after all, in spite of Shakespeare!

I have, indeed, seen Mark Twain very much in earnest. That was on the Negro question. What seemed to me a great prejudice, represented, in his eyes, a regular danger to the civilised world. Not long ago, a very cultivated woman, just arrived from America, spoke to me with dread about the impudence and self-conceit of the negroes. How different her pictures were from those of Mrs. Beecher-Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin!*

Another great personality was Verestchagin, the Russian painter, a very dear friend of mine. I have elsewhere described him as the Count Tolstoy of painters. He had the same genius, the same fearlessness and the same craving for what he conceived to be the truth, and possibly occasionally the same exaggerated touch of realism. We Russians have a way of regarding our great artists as artists, and if they injudiciously dabble in politics, we forgive it when considering their genius.

Verestchagin took part in many wars, and it is not strange that he should say, as he once did to me, that men were everywhere the same, "all animals, combatant, pugnacious, murderous animals."

His remarks upon war are peculiarly interesting at the present time, for he was not an arm-chair philosopher, but, like Francisco Goya, had seen the real horrors of war. He pointed out that the actual killing of the enemy was only a very small part of war, which means hunger and thirst and great

hardship, sleepless nights, marches beneath blazing suns, or drenched by rain.

Verestchagin was a great friend of Skobeleff, and this drew us closely together. The two had been through the same war together; and I remember that but for the wisdom of certain Russian officials that war might have been prolonged.

It is well known that Skobeleff was a man of very independent character. On the eve of the Russo-Turkish War some difficulty arose between him and the authorities, and he determined to resign his commission and enlist as a private, as he was determined to fight, no matter in what capacity. He was saved from this by a prudent act on the part of the officials known in England as "climbing down." Who knows what would have happened had the brave and glorious Skobeleff been one of the led instead of the idolised leader?

Skobeleff was indeed one of the most charming, captivating men I ever met. I was acquainted with his mother at a time when the son was only known to me by his brilliant reputation. Madame Skobeleff, passing through Moscow, once invited me to accompany her on a journey to the Balkans, which tempting invitation, however, I did not accept, owing to the fact that my husband was at the time ill, and I did not venture to leave him. My matrimonial scruples probably saved my life, as Madame Skobeleff met her death during that journey, and had I been with her I should probably have shared her fate. To be more precise, she was assassinated by her Montenegrin guide, Uzatis, who immediately committed suicide, so that the motives

of the murder remained an inscrutable mystery, as he did not touch her jewellery or her money.

One day I received a letter from Skobeleff, asking permission to call on me. He came and talked, which he did to perfection. And I—listened: the only thing *I* do to perfection! My heart was throbbing all the time, to a point that made me wonder whether it would not burst, as he kept on talking of his determination to go to Egypt, or anywhere, for some fighting, no matter in what capacity, be it even as a humble private.

"Are you not ashamed of yourself," I exclaimed, "to risk a life so precious to Russia? Stay at home, exercise your influence on our foreign policy—that is also a noble work."

"Oh," he answered, "as to that I am convinced that death will find me, not on the battlefield, but at home, in Russia. Every day I receive scores of anonymous letters, predicting the nearness of my end."

On leaving me, he asked if I would accept his photograph, which he afterwards sent me, with charmingly encouraging inscription: "To Mme. Olga Novikoff from an enthusiastic admirer of her patriotic work." I may add that this fine portrait is now in Moscow in the Roumiantzoff Museum.

Two weeks later he was no more.

Verestchagin described to me some of the horrors of the Bulgarian war. I would willingly have closed my ears to them, but there is a strange and grim fascination in horror, especially when described by a man of Verestchagin's personality.

He saw the Turkish prisoners being driven north-

ward to Russia and the agonies they suffered. To add to the frightfulness an early frost set in and the poor fellows, worn out through the long siege, dropped by the wayside and were frozen to death.

These scenes enabled him to paint Napoleon's "Retreat from Moscow." It is of peculiar interest now to recall the Kaiser's comments when he saw Verestchagin's picture exhibited at Berlin. He looked long and earnestly at the canvas, in particular at the figure of Napoleon tramping through the snow. He is said to have remarked that such pictures were our safest guarantees against war. "Yet," he added, "in spite of that there will still be men who want to govern the world, but they will all end the same."

Was this a prophecy, or merely a remark uttered with the object of blinding his contemporaries to his real purpose? It is certainly very interesting to note that the Kaiser would not allow the students of the military schools to see the "Retreat from Moscow." People must draw from that their own conclusions.

Verestchagin came to London on the occasion of his Exhibition, when I saw a good deal of him. Suddenly he was called back to Russia, and he came to me and announced his intention of returning immediately.

"But," I said, "you cannot leave your pictures."

"There are my two servants," he replied. "They will look after them."

"But," expostulated I, "they can speak only Russian, and that will not be of much assistance to them in London. How can they look after your

affairs when they cannot speak either English or French?"

"Oh, that will be all right," he replied. "They will manage."

That was Verestchagin all over. The upshot of it was that I volunteered to look after his interests, and every morning I would go down to the gallery to see if there was anything demanding attention, and the people at the gallery, apparently marvelling at such devotion in a friend, insisted upon addressing me as Madame Verestchagin.

Verestchagin was one of the first victims of the Russo-Japanese war.

CHAPTER VI

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS I

A Pacific Emperor—An Imperial Fault—The Pauper's Funeral—The Emperor's Visit to my Mother—My Dilemma—The Emperor's Kindness—He is Snubbed by an *Ingénue*—The Emperor's Desire for an Alliance with England—Prince Gortschakoff's Rejoinder—The Slav Ideal—Russia and Constantinople—Bismarck's Admiration—He Discomfits a Member of the Reichstag

A NOTEWORTHY example of a *rapprochement* between England, France, and Russia, long before the Triple Entente in politics became an established fact, was the researches undertaken three-quarters of a century ago, by three leading scientific authorities, into the geological features of the Russian Empire. Sir Roderick Murchison, M. de Verneuil and Count Alexander Keyserling were appointed by their respective Governments to make a joint expedition and, as a result of their labours, wrote a book entitled *The Geology of Russia in Europe and the Urals*, which was published by the British Museum in 1845, in two volumes. This was indeed a promising beginning, and may be said to have been the precursor for much co-operation between these nations long before an Entente was within the sphere of practical politics. At any rate, it serves to prove that there is a natural bond of sympathy between the great Allies, and that it is in no sense a question of political expediency.

This took place under the Emperor Nicholas I, who was always for peace, and in particular for an understanding with England. The whole situation in Europe has changed since those days, or rather seems to have changed. In reality it is not so. A few persons have made an effort to open their eyes, and have discovered a well-established fact. That is all. It is an important discovery, no doubt, so important that nervous politicians conjure up imaginary difficulties, and appeal to all sorts of magic utterances: "Balance of power," cries one; "Immediate danger," shouts the other; "Traditional policy," exclaims the third. But all these appeals might as well not have been made. The "newly-discovered fact" has been known to Russians for years, although clever Westerns have only just found it out. It is indeed only natural that we should know it first, for it relates to our Emperor. Europe has learned to feel that there is once more an Emperor Nicholas on the Russian throne, and that in Alexander III even the most imperious of Chancellors found a Sovereign whom no intimidation could dismay, and no menace could deter from the path of duty. Some Englishmen, I regret to say, did not like the memory of the Emperor, whose noble and generous qualities are more and more appreciated in History. The Emperor Nicholas I was undoubtedly a superior man in many respects. Imperious he was, no doubt—it is an Imperial fault! —but he was not only disinterested, he was generous and noble in the highest degree. Books could be written about his kind actions.

He was once driving on a cold winter's day, when

he perceived a poor hearse, and a still poorer coffin. There were no followers, but the young driver, almost a child, was sobbing bitterly, and evidently overwhelmed with his grief. The Emperor stopped his horse and asked who the departed was.

"It was my father," answered the boy, through a new torrent of tears. "He was a blind beggar, and I had him under my care."

The Emperor left his sledge and followed the humble coffin to the burial ground. Naturally, many people followed His Majesty's example, and the procession became a strange sight. Strange, but fine—paternal, showing once more the link between the great autocrat and his people—a link based on devotion and trust. As a very young child I have myself experienced the kindness of his smile, and felt the protection of his powerful hand.

If I may tell the story again, I remember, when my father died, the Emperor Nicholas I paid a visit of condolence to my mother, and desired to see his god-children. My two brothers and I appeared. I, as the only girl, received from my governess stringent orders before entering the drawing-room to "look well and to make a deep Court *reverence*." Penetrated with my new rôle, and full of zeal, I did my best—which, alas! turned out to be my very worst—I bowed so deeply that suddenly all became confused and I fell over backwards against a pillar. A horrified glance from mother—the roof with its painted flowers and Cupids—misery and bewilderment! But all this lasted only a second. The dear Emperor rushed to me, seized my trembling hands, and began praising me as if I had really covered

myself, not with ridicule, but with glory. Thus he cheered me and made me happy. People who knew him intimately speak of him with unqualified devotion. But the fascination he exercised did not render less commanding the conscious power which dwelt within him. For he was a power—perhaps the greatest power of his day.

The great and unexpected steps taken by his grandson allowed us to hope to find the same resolute devotion to his country in our present ruler, Nicholas II, and we did not hope in vain.

The Emperor Nicholas I was charmingly courteous and kind to young people. Thus, one day, the Court arrived in Moscow, and the Moscow nobility arranged a brilliant ball to greet Their Majesties. Naturally the young girls all longed to be presented on this occasion. One amongst them was exceedingly beautiful and attractive. The Emperor addressed a few words to her, expressing his pleasure at making her acquaintance. She looked at him somewhat severely, without answering a word.

"Do you not hear what I say?" enquired the Emperor in some surprise.

"Yes," replied the young lady curtly, "I hear, but I do not listen!" (J'enténds mais je n'écoute pas!)

The Emperor, extremely amused by this tone of self-defence, when he never dreamt of attacking or offending, went to the Empress. "There is a charming child here," he said, "most amusing and innocent. Make her your Maid of Honour." This was done. By her position she was quite entitled to this distinction, but still, people were very much amused. Later on she received other honours,

occupied a high position at our Court, and died only a short time ago.

One of the great desires of the Emperor Nicholas I was to establish such a close and cordial alliance between Russia and England as even then would form a solid guarantee of peace to the world. It was his desire to cement the alliance that led him to make those overtures to Sir Henry Seymour, which were so basely misrepresented and so perfidiously utilised to destroy the good understanding they were intended to promote.

"'You know my feelings?' so Mr. Kinglake begins the story, in his vivacious and charming but slightly unjust *The Invasion of the Crimea*, 'you know my feelings,' said the Emperor to Sir Henry Seymour, 'with regard to England. What I have told you before, I say again; it was intended that the two countries should be upon terms of close amity; and I feel sure that this will continue to be the case; and I repeat that it is very essential that the two Governments should be on the best of terms, and the necessity was never greater than at present. When we are agreed, I am quite without anxiety as to the rest of Europe. It is immaterial what the others may think or do.'"

This is what the Emperor Nicholas always said, and it was with him a fixed idea. "I desire to speak to you," he said on another occasion, "as a friend and as a gentleman. [The Emperor little knew how the confidence he placed in the "gentleman" would be requited.] If England and I arrive at an understanding in this matter it is indifferent what others do or think."

In 1846, during his visit to London, the Emperor expressed a wish that, while he would do all in his power to keep the "Sick Man" (Turkey) alive, we should keep the possible and eventual case of a collapse honestly and reasonably before our eyes. This is not the only reason why the memory of the Emperor Nicholas I is ever grateful to those who labour for the Anglo-Russian Alliance. Nor is it the only one why I recall these suggestive passages just now. Some people invoke the prejudice of the past to poison the friendship of the future. Let me take a more grateful course of recalling the repeated attempts of Russia to arrive at a good understanding with England. There is a continuity about Russian policy, and the principles laid down by the grandfather are followed by the grandson.

It is important to remember that in the last century, Austria and England, the friends of the Porte, have taken more Turkish territory for themselves than we, her hereditary foes.

Let us remember the following facts: The Emperor Nicholas I decided to concede to England all she wanted concerning Egypt; and in return, so far from stipulating for the possession, at that time, of Constantinople, he offered to make an engagement not to establish himself there as possessor, not even if circumstances compelled him to undertake a temporary occupation of the city. What then was the Emperor's proposal? It was that of a friendly understanding, "as between gentlemen," that certain things should not be done in case of a sudden collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

Such were the earnest wishes of Russia, but

England remained deaf and prejudiced, suspicious and hostile. She preferred a bloody struggle to a hearty alliance, and a tremendous war was fought —thousands of innocent people killed, millions of money spent on both sides—and with no actual result. Does anything remain of the famous Treaty of Paris? I remember having once asked Prince Gortschakoff whether it was he or Count Nesselrode who signed that treaty. The Chancellor was ill, and thought he could not leave his chair, but my question electrified him.

"No," he exclaimed, forgetting his illness and jumping to his feet, "I did not put my name to that document, but I spent a good part of my life in tearing it to pieces. And it is torn to pieces," he repeated, with a vivid, delighted look.

In order to be on good terms with Russia, England has merely not to interfere in Russia's dealings with the Slavs, her co-religionists; not demoralise the latter, not to support elements opposed to our Church and our nationality. In fact, it is an easy, negative part she has to play. Instead of this, in Beaconsfield's days, she quarrelled like a nervous woman, and we acted, perhaps, like another nervous woman. Now, however, is the day of strong men, both English and Russian.

Nicholas I saw that it is of vital importance for the Slavs, who are no traitors to their country, to cling to Russia, because she is the only Power that cares for their Church and their nationality. The Slavs incorporated with Germany have been thoroughly Germanised. Austria is not so clever as her master, but she successfully introduces the

Roman Catholic propaganda among the Slavs; imprisons men like Father Naoumovitch for his devotion to the Eastern Church, and morally does almost more harm to the poor young nationalities than does Turkey.

I remember when I was quite a child, a young Southern Slav came to my mother and began complaining of their position. My mother interrupted him by asking, "Would you prefer to belong to Austria?" Though a child, I was horrified to see the despair of his face. "Oh," cried he, "Austria is even worse than Turkey. Turkey kills the body —Austria kills the soul." This is an opinion which, it may be said, is generally held amongst the Southern Slavs—and terribly verified in Bulgaria at the present moment (1916).

It is difficult for outsiders to judge Slavonic troubles and Slavonic needs. It is a private family affair, which ought to be left to us to settle. The Slavs awoke England's sympathies only when it was thought they were the enemies of Russia. Alas! They had their pet name in England, and it was not complimentary.

Is it rational, I ventured to ask in the year 1886, to awaken general indignation in a country like Russia, which could be so useful as an ally? We have common enemies in Asia. Fancy the power represented by two great Christian countries like Russia and England, when they are united and friendly! Is it really not worth having? Time has given me my answer.

People have been so kind as to say that I have been mainly responsible for the bringing together

of England and Russia, but whatever I have done I have merely been carrying on the ideal of the Emperor Nicholas I.

Kinglake wrote: "The Emperor Nicholas had laid down for himself a rule which was always to guide his conduct upon the Eastern Question; and it seems to be certain that at this time (the eve of the Turkish war of 1853), even in his most angry moments, he intended to cling to his resolve. What he had determined was that no temptation should draw him into hostile conflict with England." [1]

It must be borne in mind that this is the testimony of an Englishman, and one who cannot be accused of being pro-Russian.

It is interesting to recall the words addressed by the Emperor Nicholas I to the English Ambassador at Petrograd in 1853. The Emperor then said:

"The affairs of Turkey are in a very disorganised condition; the country itself seems to be falling to pieces; the fall will be a great misfortune, and it is very important that England and Russia should come to a perfectly good understanding upon these affairs. We have on our hands a Sick Man, a very Sick Man. It will be, I tell you frankly, a great misfortune if one of these days he should slip away from us, especially before all necessary arrangements are made. If the Turkish Empire falls, it falls to rise no more; and I put it you, therefore, whether it is not better to be provided beforehand for a contingency, than to incur the chaos, confusion, and the certainty of an European war, all of which must attend the catas-

[1] *The Invasion of the Crimea.* Sixth edition.

trophe if it should occur unexpectedly and before some ulterior system has been sketched."

The Sick Man certainly has taken longer in dying than the Emperor thought, but he certainly seems to be well on the way now.

Nicholas I was a statesman, one who has been described as bearing "the stamp of a generous and chivalrous nature."

Bismarck himself, in 1849, expressed his admiration of the Emperor's conduct in regard to Hungary. He was always essentially upright and straightforward, and was in every sense of the term a strong man.

Writing of Bismarck reminds me of a story I have heard which I do not remember to have seen in print.

One of Bismarck's most violent opponents thought to damage the Chancellor's position by re-reading one of his own speeches made some years previously. In a loud determined voice the deputy read Bismarck's words before the Reichstag, no one listening to him with more attention than Bismarck himself. When at last the deputy concluded, confident of his own triumph, Bismarck exclaimed: "I should hardly have expected to hear such a prudent, useful speech, and some twenty years ago nothing could have been more appropriate. At this moment, of course, it is quite out of date and could not be acted upon."

CHAPTER VII

"AS OTHERS SEE US"

"A Russian Agent"—"To Lure British Statesmen"—A Charming Tribute—The Press at Sea—Wild Stories—A Musical Political Agitator—"An Unofficial Ambassador"—Baron de Staal's Indifference—Prince Lobanoff's Kindness—Count Shouvaloff's Dislike of My Work—Prince Gortschakoff and the Slavs—Baron Brunow and the French Ambassador—English Sportsmanship—A Shakespeare Banquet

HOW people talked about me in those days! asking each other who and what I was, what I was doing, or intended doing. "Oh! Madame Novikoff," said some, "she is a Russian agent," and their significant nods and glances conveyed all sorts of terrible things. I had come to England, some thought, to lure British statesmen to betray their country into Russian hands. In short, quite a number of amiable things were said about poor, simple me, who tried so hard to say exactly the truth about what I well knew.

In later years, Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett at a public meeting paid a tribute to my work which I quote, not from vanity, but as an unexpected exaggeration. Sir Ellis said, "As for Madame Novikoff, it is simply impossible to estimate the services she has rendered her country. Not all the diplomatic corps of the Empire and all the Grand Dukes have done as much for Russia as that lady,

MINNEAPOLIS 4, MINN.

who since 1877 has directed the Russian campaign in England with consummate ability. She has been worth more to Russia than an army of 100,000 men. Nothing that the Tsar could bestow upon her could adequately repay her peerless services."

But there was the other side of the picture. The London correspondent of a provincial paper described me as "one of the most masculine and accomplished women of her time—she has come to be looked upon as the Czar's agent, as a sort of unofficial Ambassador." Imagine my being described as "masculine," a thing I execrate in women. I became too accustomed to the term "unofficial ambassador" to take any notice of it, but "masculine!" Ugh!

Then, said another paper, "Think of the women who have achieved a reputation in diplomacy—such women as Madame de Novikoff, Princess Lise Troubetskoi, Madame Nubar Pasha, Princess Metternich, and the late Princess Leopold Croy. What other characteristic is common to them all? Only this, that one and all they have been inveterate consumers of cigarettes, and each has availed herself with signal advantage of the opportunity afforded by toying with a fragrant papiletto to reflect before speaking, which women, as a rule, are said not always to do."

Alas for the common characteristic! I have never smoked in my life. But then I may be one of the women who do not "reflect before speaking." Smoking is not so common a habit of Russian ladies as is generally supposed. Indeed, Petrograd society was a little surprised some years ago when a British Ambassadress, with kind intent, arranged at the

ST. OLGA'S SCHOOL FOR GIRL TEACHERS AT NOVO-ALEXANDROFKA

Embassy a smoking-room for ladies. Even amongst men, smoking was not universal. My husband was not a smoker, nor was either of my two brothers. Several Russian gentlemen whom I know in London do not smoke.

On another occasion the Press informed me that I had selected America as my future home. "Her mission," one paper grandly announced, "on behalf of Russia has not of course been very popular. . . . What she has to do for Russia in America the Yankees will doubtless find out; at any rate she is backed by the Russian fleet, which will soon be, if it is not already, in American waters." I need not say that this was pure imagination. The idea of a "secret agent" being "backed" by a fleet is, I think, new in international methods.

I detest the word "mission" as applied to my work, which was as much in the interests of England as of Russia, as can easily be seen to-day. Where would Europe be now if it were not for the Russian armies, and where would the Russian armies be but for the English Navy? A woman with a mission is as objectionable as a man with a grievance.

One provincial newspaper, in a burst of confidence, assured its readers that Madame Novikoff "does not suggest the political agitator, she is very fond of music, and some distinguished artist is generally to be found at her piano." I have often wondered what "a political agitator" would appear like to the writer of this paragraph, and why should he not be musical?

Was anything ever so bewildering? When I look over my press-cutting books I cannot do so

without a smile. Now it is all so amusing; but then it had in it an element of tragedy, for my work was nearer to my heart than anything else. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, for instance, remarked that "Mr. Gladstone praises Madame Novikoff for her remarkable ability in handling political controversy. Some of us think it would be more correct to do homage to her remarkable ability in handling political men." This was a tribute to me, in a way, at poor Mr. Gladstone's expense.

Another industrious young man wrote in 1889, apropos my return to London, that my "Thursdays" would be "again the rendezvous of the light, learning, and wit of London society. At least, this is how the friends of the Russian lady describe her parties. But her detractors and enemies say they are merely a clever trap for attracting people from whom she may obtain information to dispatch to Russia. A curious thing is that Baron and Baroness de Staal, the Russian Ambassador and his wife, are often to be seen there, so that the legitimate and the illegitimate purveyors of news to Russia meet on common ground."

It is quite easy to see which view of my poor "Thursdays" was taken by the writer of the above.

Neither Baron nor Baroness de Staal were ever afraid to show me publicly their sympathy and support. Monsieur de Staal even went so far as to tell an English Cabinet Minister, who wished to verify one of my statements, that if Madame Novikoff said so, it was probably true, for she was often better informed than he of what the Russian Government was thinking of doing. "Indeed," said the old

Ambassador, "they never tell me anything until they have definitely decided on doing it."

I heard this from Mr. Stead, who had just returned from the Foreign Office, and looked somewhat bewildered by the compliment paid to me. We were both amused, since few ambassadors make such admissions.

Not less welcome than the frank admission of the Russian Ambassador was the approval of my efforts by our Minister for Foreign Affairs himself, who, unlike Count Shouvaloff, about whom I still have a word to say, recognised the usefulness of my endeavours to foster friendly feelings between Russia and England.

It was with profound satisfaction indeed that I received the following letter from Prince Lobanoff-Rostovsky:

ST. PETERSBURG,
21 *Feb.*/4 *March*, 1896.

MADAME,

I admire your courageous perseverance in dealing with messieurs les Anglais, and I am very grateful for the assistance that you render us.

Accept my profound respects,

LOBANOFF.

It is such kindnesses which, in supporting and encouraging my efforts, have bribed me hitherto, and shall not fail to bribe me in the future.

Sometimes my own people showed themselves anything but understanding and sympathetic. As my thoughts wander through the pages of memory, many shadows from the past arise before me, and I

think of how much good, and also how much harm, can be done by a man in a great public position. There are indeed many things in life that one must try to forget and forgive.

I confess that, unfortunately, my ardent aspirations did not, in every case, meet with sympathy, even amongst my own relatives.

I fully appreciated, for instance, the talents and honourable qualities of my brother-in-law, E. Novikoff, and much admired his excellent and exhaustive work on John Huss, the Czech reformer and writer, who preceded Luther by a whole century. This book, by the way, is now unfortunately out of print. But while I always remained a staunch Slavophil, E. Novikoff, after his appointment as Ambassador to Vienna, was obliged in his official capacity to obey the orders of the Foreign Office, and in so doing yielded so far to Austrian views as to become indifferent, not to say hostile, to the Slavonic cause. To me, personally, he invariably showed friendship, and invited me for a whole year to the Russian Embassy at Vienna, a visit which I greatly enjoyed. But I always avoided all reference to the subjects that henceforth divided us.

This was also the case in my relations with Count Shouvaloff, at one time our Russian Ambassador in London, who instead of helping me, constantly did me harm. He was polite and ceremonious in paying me visits, but he hated my work. I am surprised indeed that he did not succeed in paralysing my efforts altogether. It is useful sometimes to be tough and obstinate!

In the light of this fact there was something

almost comical in the comment of one journal which said :

"Madame Novikoff is a Russian agent in close relations with Count Shouvaloff, and she is the sister of General Kiréeff and sister-in-law of the Russian Ambassador at Vienna. This is the person with whom our ex-premier was admittedly in close alliance, public and private, during the recent atrocity agitation. But when the climax of the pro-Russian agitation was reached, and its managers believed the overthrow of Lord Beaconsfield to be imminent, Mr. Gladstone, at the close of the St. James's Hall 'Conference,' left his seat, went up to Madame Novikoff, offered her his arm, and led her triumphantly through the bewildered crowd, in order to give them an earnest of the anti-Turkish alliance at last concluded between England and Russia, and thereby publicly acknowledged that his relations with that lady belong to the province of public life, and ought to be treated as matters of public concern. That also, we have no doubt, will be the opinion of the country when the nature of these relations has been more explicitly revealed."

There was one man who occupied a powerful position in Russia and, as I have said, was well known in the world, and who boasted that though he never signed the Paris Treaty, he did all in his power to abolish the consequences of that detestable document. I mean the Chancellor of Russia, the Prince Gortschakoff.

My last interview with him was not altogether pleasant : with one hand he gave "his praise," with the other "his blame." (His right hand really did

not know what his left was doing !) But here are a few facts, now known in Russia, but unknown in England.

I think I have said that for several years I carefully concealed my literary identity. In Russia it was known to Katkoff, the editor of the *Moscow Gazette,* in England chiefly to Stead, my English editor, and to Mr. Gladstone, who was my energetic political confidant. For that purpose I used my maiden initials " O. K." (Olga Kiréeff).

On my return home from England I received a note from the Chancellor asking me to call on him " as he was too ill to make calls."

By the by, I must say that in Russia it is quite customary, even for a very young woman, to call on business, either at a Cabinet Minister's Office or on an Ambassador at his Embassy.

In both cases the Office and the Embassy take the place of the absent wives, and such visits are fully understood. Still, people make some jokes about wives being thus replaced. But let me return to my unpleasant interview. The Prince received me, as usual, very cordially, flattering and complimenting me, but after which he said : " But, dear Madame Novikoff, I must insist upon one point and draw your serious attention to something very important. You really must not mention the word 'Slav.' Europe hates that word, and Russia must ignore it."

" But Russians are Slavs, every schoolboy must know that," I exclaimed.

" Of course, of course," admitted the old Chancellor, " but Europe hates that word. It is the red rag thrown to an infuriated bull," etc. etc.

If I indulged in fainting fits I really think that such friendly advice would have made me sink to the floor, but that is not in my line. Still, I protested.

"But, Prince," said I, "you forget that my brother died for the Slavs, that I, in memory of that death, am working for that Cause, that Mr. Gladstone, in his review of my book, *Russia and England*, distinctly recommended every Englishman to read it, and that he himself wrote a pamphlet on the Bulgarian horrors. Your advice to a Russian, who naturally is a Slav, means—give up your nationality, forget it. No, that I cannot do, for that would be suicide."

I think my vehement indignation amused the old Chancellor, and he said: "Well, well, but do you know that people actually think that you are my agent?"

"It only shows," I said, "how important people's opinions sometimes are. Let them know that I am my own agent and nobody else's." He smiled, I smiled, and we parted—never to meet again.

Of course, we must remember that officials come and go and have to execute orders, which sometimes vary and contradict each other. But you can obstinately, perseveringly, year after year and day after day—work, in accordance with your patriotic duty, only when you are guided by your own deep, independent conviction and ideal!

Why did the Emperor Nicholas save Austria in 1849; alienating himself from the brave Hungarian people, who during a whole century heroically fought to liberate themselves from Austrian despotism?

There is a story about another of our diplomatists, Baron Brunow, which although it has been told before, is so characteristic of Brunow that it will, I think, bear re-telling.

On arriving in London for the first time I was pleased to receive an invitation to the Russian Embassy, because Baron Brunow knew my mother personally, and also because I had heard the following anecdote about him which had greatly amused me: Queen Victoria, deeply grieved by the death of the Duke of Wellington, had expressed her wish that the funeral of the "Iron Duke," as he was called, should be as splendid as possible. The whole of the Corps Diplomatique was requested to attend the ceremony. All the diplomatists unhesitatingly accepted the royal invitation—with one exception, that of the French Ambassador. The latter, in a state of great perplexity and indecision, hurried to the Doyen of "the diplomatic" world, Baron Brunow.

"I am in a very disagreeable position," he said, "I am indeed quite at a loss what to do. How shall I escape from my dilemma? Of course, one does not like to disobey Her Majesty's wishes—almost her orders; but one must nevertheless consider before all else one's duty to one's country, one's national dignity!"

Unlike a Frenchman, the visitor seemed particularly agitated and nervous.

"But what is the matter?" exclaimed the Baron. "I have received no communication about your difficulty. None of my secretaries has informed me of anything unusual. What is the matter?" repeated the old Baron somewhat impatiently.

"Don't you understand?" exclaimed the other. "The Queen desires every diplomatist to attend Wellington's funeral. From her point of view she is quite right. But I, as a Frenchman, can never forget the terrible harm done by the Duke to the country I represent."

"Oh!" exclaimed the Russian in smiling surprise. "You dislike the idea of attending the State funeral? I confess that I also hardly like the idea of the fatigue it involves. But then, you are much younger and stronger than I. Of course, if you were asked to attend Wellington's resurrection, perhaps I should say 'don't go'—but his funeral, which represents the end of all possible mischief to your country, I can only say, 'Go and attend it by all means with great satisfaction!'"

I have never been able to find out from the various books I have consulted relating to those times, whether or not the Frenchman followed Brunow's advice!

Although I have never hesitated to speak my mind, English people—individually that is—have always seemed to understand me, and my sincerity has never been allowed either to interfere with my personal friendships, or hinder societies and committees paying the compliment of asking me to their gatherings. In England they love a fighter, provided he fight fair, and I think I have always done that. Imagine Germany, for instance, paying tributes to the commander of an English *Emden*, which had done enormous damage to her shipping! Yet in England almost as much praise was bestowed upon this German naval officer as in the Father-

land. Why was this? Because he had played the game!

I have received many and unexpected invitations to be present at public dinners and banquets. When I received a "card" from the Committee of the Shakespeare Society for their banquet, I could not help wondering how anyone could find something new to say on a subject so well-worn during the last 300 years! Imagine, then, my astonishment, my horror, when I found on the programme my own name with the announcement that I was responding to the toast addressed to foreign guests. My first impulse was to fly; but such cowardice not being in my nature, I took my courage in my hands, and at the given moment pronounced these few words, as if it were quite a natural thing for me to make speeches:

"Kind audience,—I am flattered by your amiable invitation, to which, as a foreigner, I have hardly any right. But let me tell you that I have a little friend who renders me invaluable services. I mean my little watch bracelet, that makes me think of time and space. I shall not trouble you for more than five or six minutes; for though I feel myself to be a veritable Demosthenes, I resemble him only as he was before his famous pebble cure! You know that at the time he hesitated, stammered, and stuttered. Therefore, five minutes of eloquence on these conditions is all I dare inflict on your patience.

"I will begin by saying that one of the best translations of your great writer was made by the Grand Duke Constantine, who died a few months ago. This charming Grand Duke had, in addition,

a considerable histrionic talent, and his 'Hamlet' represented by himself at the Palace of Their Majesties in Petrograd, achieved an immense success.

"But there is still something else that I shall take the liberty to say about Shakespeare. In our day there is much talk of enemies, alliances, friendly treaties, etc. Nothing can be more apropos at this moment. But Shakespeare has done something that surpasses all ententes, alliances, and treaties between countries large and small. Shakespeare has become the eternal link by which all parts of the civilised, thinking, reading world are indissolubly united. This is a unique part created by an Englishman.

"As a last word. I can only say, ladies and gentlemen, you have every reason to be proud of this acknowledged fact."

Upon this I bowed and resumed my place. My little speech was received most kindly. There could not have been a better reward for my laconism.

CHAPTER VIII

JEWISH RUSSOPHOBIA

The Jews and the War—Their Attitude in 1876—Their Hatred of Slavism—The Problems of Other Countries—English Sympathy—The Guildhall Meeting—The Russian Government Blamed—Tolstoy and the Jews—My Jewish Friends—A Curious Tradition—Self-Protection

IN many respects the Jewish Question in Russia has now become an anachronism. I am happy to say that a new argument in favour of the Jews is the part played by many of them in our ranks during the present struggle against the Central Empires. Their present attitude has effaced the great hatred they used to manifest against everything Russian. But a survey of my work for Anglo-Russian friendship would be incomplete and would not be honest if it passed over my attitude on this question, and especially as the attacks made upon me have been very vigorous and have forced me to retort in what was, for me, an almost single-handed struggle.

My first public expression of views upon the Jewish Question was in 1882, when I addressed two letters to *The Times* in which I protested against the accusations levelled against the Russian Government that it encouraged the social war against the Jews in the southern provinces. I pointed out that

the origin of the disturbances was economic rather than religious. I said then, as I shall always say, that the worst charges brought against the Jews could not by any form of special pleading be held to justify outrage and murder. I reminded the Jews that when thousands of harmless peasants, men, women and children, were being ruthlessly slaughtered in Bulgaria, they ranged themselves beside those responsible for the massacres, the Turks. The next worst thing to committing a murder is to look calmly on and sympathise with another who is taking life. That is what the Hebrews did in 1876. At least they should be logical, and if they do not like the application of "the Law," which demands "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," they should have acted differently in 1876.

When Mr. Gladstone and his friends were fighting what seemed to be a losing battle, the Jews were against them. It was a Jew, Disraeli, who was the arch-plotter against the freeing of Bulgaria, and with a few exceptions his race was with him. The Jews hated Slavism, and the Slavs could not be expected to retort with soft words of brotherly love. In spite of this, I repeat that the peasant riots against the Jews in some provinces deserved blame; but the actions of mobs are never based upon religious principles or religious teaching.

In England, Russia's Jewish problem is not understood. I wrote in 1882, and the same applies now: "It may be wrong to dislike the Jews, but if two and a half million Chinese were monopolising all the best things in Southern England, and were multiplying even more rapidly than the natives of

the soil, perhaps the cry 'England for the English' would not be so unpopular as some of our censors seem to think."

The feeling against the Japanese in certain parts of America is, I believe, every whit as bitter as the feeling against the Jews in Russia. I have always been puzzled why the Englishman cannot see this. The Jew is the Cuckoo of Russia; he is forcing the aborigines out of their own nest, and Russians not unnaturally say: "Our own Government helps him to do it, therefore it is time we helped ourselves."

People are prone to hasty judgment.

In *The Times*, on the occasion to which I have referred above, I wrote:

"The Landlordism of which your Irish farmers complain is but a pale shadow of the cruel servitude enforced on our peasants by the Jews. The disorders both in Ukraine and in Ireland are social and agrarian."

Eight years later the Jewish Question in Russia once more seemed to catch hold of the English imagination, and with increased violence.

A flaming up of Russian violence against the Jews in the south-western provinces of Russia was the cause. In London Christian sympathy was invoked, and the heads of the Church, nobility and members of Parliament besought the Lord Mayor to convene a meeting of protest with the object of preparing a Memorial to be sent to the Tsar "to give public expression of opinion respecting the renewed persecutions to which millions of the Jewish race are subjected in Russia, under the yoke of severe and exceptional edicts and disabilities."

I immediately wrote to *The Times* pointing out that before Englishmen began to look abroad for things to reform, they might well put their own house in order. I called attention to General Booth's recently published book, *In Darkest England*, which I had read with something akin to horror. I wonder what would have been said in England if meetings of protest against the Horrors of London had been held in Petrograd!

In my indignation I even ventured to assume the mantle of prophecy. "While your meeting," I wrote, "will have no effect whatever upon Russians, it will have a great effect upon the Jews of Russia. It will proclaim aloud, in the hearing of these millions, that England and its great Lord Mayor, with all the wealth of London at their back, have undertaken the cause of the Russian Jews. And these poor people will believe it, and thousands and tens of thousands will sell all they have and come over to experience the first fruits of the generosity which promises them a new land of Canaan—in the City of London.

"I adjourn the further discussion of the Jewish question until you have had, let us say, ten per cent of the immigration which these meetings will invite."

In a little more than the ten years I mentioned the Aliens Act had become law!

The Guildhall meeting was held on December 10th, 1890, and the Memorial to the Russian Emperor was carried without a dissentient voice and duly sent to Petrograd. In February the Russian Ambassador handed the Memorial to Lord Salisbury

with a request that he would have the kindness to return it to the Lord Mayor unanswered; as a matter of fact it had not even been read in Russia.

I need scarcely add that I was assailed by Jews from every quarter as "one whom the whole Jewish race recognised as their bitterest enemy," and yet all I said in effect was that if the Montagues hate the Capulets, and the Capulets the Montagues, then all the Acts of Parliament will not ensure peace. And yet we women are called unreasonable.

I will quote again from one of my letters to *The Times*, for although written thirty-four years ago, I see no reason to change so much as a word.

"The Jewish question is not entirely religious, but social. Englishmen ought to understand it, for they have to deal very often with the same difficulties. An Anglo-Indian member of Parliament, of great eminence as an administrator in Bengal, was kind enough to lend me the other day an interesting Blue Book on the riots in the Deccan, from which I learn that the most innocent agriculturists in India have repeatedly attacked the Hindoo money-lenders, exactly as our peasants attacked the Jews, and for the same reason. And how did you deal with this difficulty? Not by increasing the licence, but by restricting the opportunities of the Hindoo money-lenders; and as you do it with some success, your example can be useful indeed. In short, you do as General Ignatieff proposed to do in his famous rescript which you abuse so much. Seek to remove the cause of the disorder by protecting the peasants against the extortionate practices of the village usurers."

In those days I was not lazy and wrote as well as I could; but how difficult people were to convince. They seemed unable to distinguish between a Yiddish-speaking Jew, who had been domiciled in Russia, and a true Russian, and nothing can be more insulting to a Russian than this. The Yiddish jargon is not used by men of the Russian race, who have at their command so rich, so musical, so melodious a language as that which Pouschkin, Tourguenieff, and Tolstoy found an adequate instrument for the expression of their genius.

A Yiddish-speaking man may be a Russian subject, but he is no more a real Russian on that account than a Hottentot, being a British subject, is a real Englishman. Although we Russians may be as bad as some people describe us, we have at least one virtue which is not always recognised: we do our utmost to prevent murderers, thieves, and burglars, and other criminals crossing the frontier. No Russian subject is allowed to leave Russia without a passport, which is never granted to any known criminal. If any such criminals evade our vigilance, our police are only too anxious to inform your police and solicit their co-operation in the arrest of the fugitive. But such offenders have only to allege that they are political refugees, to be welcomed in England and protected by the authorities. In England murder used to be regarded as no murder when the victim was a Russian policeman. But when the same criminals kill an English policeman, as they did in the Sydney Street affair, the matter is not seen in quite the same light.

Try to put yourself in our place. What would you

think if "Peter the Painter" had been welcomed in Petrograd, and if our Government had refused to give him up because he had only killed an English policeman, and was therefore entitled to the right of asylum as a political refugee? Of course, such a crime against civilisation is unthinkable on the part of the Russian Government, but it would represent only too faithfully the position which England has been proud to maintain before the world.

At the time of the Sydney Street outrage I asked:

"What I want to know is whether, now that you are suffering a very, very small part of the misery which these murderers have inflicted on us, you are willing to co-operate with the police of the world in extirpating this gang of ruthless murderers? If you are, you will find ready co-operation on our side; if you are not, then, I fear, the world will say that you care nothing for murder so long as it is only Russian police, generals, or ministers who are murdered, and you will remain in the future, as in the past, the refuge and the shelter of the assassins of the world."

Truth compels me to admit that there are blindfolded people in Russia as well as abroad, and it is not only amongst the foreigners that the real nature of the Russian nation has been sometimes misunderstood. Unfortunately there are prejudiced people amongst ourselves who insist upon being blind and unable to see obvious facts, and the meaning of the war of 1876 has been entirely misunderstood. Let us, for instance, quote Count Leon Tolstoy, who had very peculiar ideas about war. Can anybody, not only in Russia but even abroad, doubt his

talent? But nevertheless he proved how easy it is to err in politics even in spite of literary gifts.

I must quote a letter published abroad under the pompous title, *A Protest*, signed by Count Leon Tolstoy and Russian "celebrities." This document had to be presented to the Emperor—for his enlightenment. This document, however, never went so far.

This event should never have been taken *au sérieux* anywhere, though stated by a talented author.

Nothing amuses Russians more than to see how gravely "Tolstoy's philosophy and theology" is taken abroad. Amongst us he is only great as a novelist. You may, no doubt, find among the Russians, as well as abroad, enthusiasts ready to embrace any craze. Fortunately they have no lasting moral weight.

The Jewish question in Russia is a very difficult problem indeed. We have in Russia millions of Jews belonging to an anti-Christian creed, and those who imagine it is sufficient for our Emperor "to write a few lines ordering the country at large to love the Talmudist Jew," and who fail to see the difference between the latter and the Greek Orthodox Russian, forget that even Jesus Christ's law to love our enemy is often neglected by those who pride themselves on being His followers. I insist upon the term "Talmudist Jews." The Karaite Jews having joined Russia in the greater part of her national aims and duties, deservedly obtained the same privileges and rights as the rest of the people. The Talmudists, unfortunately, take a different ground, and sometimes have to suffer for it.

At the time of the Guildhall Meeting *The Daily News*, with perfect fair play, allowed a correspondent to state the facts "within their own knowledge." One of them had shortly before visited the Russian southern provinces. Here are his very words:

"The Jewish population of Odessa alone numbers about 100,000 souls. Nearly the whole of the vast commerce is in the hands of the Jews. They own a large share of the *immovable* property in the city. Of the very few and unimportant industries over which they do not command an absolute monopoly, there is scarcely one which is not virtually controlled by the ramifications exercised *by their secret commercial syndicates*."

N.B.—The Municipal Council of 72 members always includes 24 Jews, or one-third of that civil and constituent body, and in material power the Jewish section of the Council outweighs the rest. The author also admits that "if there were no limitations at all, the Jewish elements at the university would exclude all the Russians."

The same paper, allowing also another witness to be truthful and accurate, admits the following account from Petrograd itself. After complaining bitterly of the difficulty of getting from the Jews themselves any instance of oppression, he expressed his surprise that: "In the English community, chiefly interested in commerce, sympathy with the Jews has been difficult to find. Amongst the Germans and French," he goes on to say, "the same dislike of the Jews is found."

The Anglo-Saxon race has shown to the world how careful it can be in defending its interests on

the least appearance of danger from without. The innocent children of the Celestial Empire have been simply hunted out of America and Australia, although these poor timid creatures never dreamed of establishing an *imperium in imperio* which can be dangerous to the State, nor even asked for any political rights at all, their only ambition being to live in peace and to work for their rice and their rats.

The Russian Government, though not hampered by the ignorant prejudices of the masses, is obliged nevertheless to acquaint itself with public feeling, and to do its best to paralyse mischievous outbursts from whatever source. Thus in protecting the Russians from the Jews, our Government is, in fact, in accord with the parliamentary spirit of the age in its support of the protesting majority against an aggressive minority. England, of all the world, should be the last to blame those efforts.

It must not be thought that I am anti-Jewish as far as individuals are concerned. I have had very friendly relations with many Jews, including Auerbach, Mr. George Montofiore and Dr. Max Nordau, to quote only a few names. The last-named dedicated to me his play *The Right to Love, after* the Guildhall fiasco. Perhaps the most curious thing was that whereas I was attacked by Jews and vilified without mercy, my friends in Russia were angry with my "judophilism."

Just before last leaving for Russia, I was startled by the contents of a letter which appeared in London. The Jewish author of that curious document is fortunately personally unknown to me. He actually has the impudence to say that "in Russia a foreigner of

the Hebrew persuasion can easily find means and ways —*generally for the sum of fifty roubles*—to be transformed *ad hoc* into a true believer, into a Christian of any denomination of his own choice." To me that phrase is a regular riddle. Thank God! I do not know people who for fifty roubles, or no matter for how many roubles, may change their political or even religious creed. Being a convinced Christian myself, I can only be glad when I hear of somebody who has appreciated the Greek orthodox views enough to adopt them. Our Church prays daily for such unions, and I cannot understand why I should doubt the good faith of such proselytes. Has not Jesus Christ Himself ordered to propagate His teaching, and counselled us to love our enemies? I do not see why we should wound their feelings by doubting their good faith. A Hebrew or a Mohammedan, after the establishment of a new moral link with us Christians, ought to be treated as a brother and an ally.

Even without that Christian union a very great gulf exists in Russia between the "Talmudist Jews" and the "Karaims" (in England called "Karaites"). The latter are treated with confidence and respect, and their dealings are characterised by integrity and love for Russia—two qualities which are not by any means the predominant characteristics of the Talmudists. All this can be easily proved. A curious tradition seems, in the eyes of some Russians, to account for that great difference between people of the same race. The ancestors of the "Karaims" are said to have left the Holy Land much before the beginning of our era, escaping thus the blame of

having taken any part in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ—hence their moral superiority !

In protecting our country from obnoxious proselytism—be it religious or political—we defend in reality that great unity ; which naturally has to be in accordance with our Church. But our Church, as such, does not interfere with the temporal power. Her only weapon is the exclusion from her bosom of those who depart from her teaching and her practice.

CHAPTER IX

ENGLAND AND THE GREAT FAMINE IN RUSSIA

My Russian Home—The Horrors of Famine—The Peasants' Heroism —Starving yet Patient—The Society of Friends—I am Invited to Meeting—Magnificent Munificence—Among the Starving—Terrible Hardships—Some Illustrations—The Stoical Russian—Cinder Bread

THE Tamboff Steppes have a great fascination for me. I was always very happy at Novo Alexandrofka, our country home. It possesses the beautiful church built by my son. Then I have there my two other attractions, the two splendid schools, each capable of accommodating over one hundred pupils, that for boys being called St. John's, after my husband's patron saint ; and the girls' school, of which I am directress, is called St. Olga's. My son and I were always ardent believers in the importance of education, for in it lies the whole of the world. Good teachers are necessary above all, and bad schools do more harm by their existence than no schools at all, and there is nothing more wonderful or beautiful in Russia than to see the passionate eagerness of the peasants to have their children educated. I am happy to say that, thanks to our excellent teachers and the principal director, a very superior priest of our church, all our examinations have resulted in very fruitful success.

At Novo Alexandrofka, my husband, my mother, my brother, Alexander Kiréeff, my son (the founder of the church) Alexander Novikoff—are already in the family vault. The last addition will be myself, and then the vault shall be definitely closed.

Some ten years ago when I was present at the final examination of the girls, no less than nineteen fulfilled the requirements of the Tamboff Education Committee, and were all qualified to become school-teachers. Since then we have had only excellent results of our schools,

The most unhappy time I ever spent at my home was during the terrible famine in Russia in 1892. I could not remain in England while my country was suffering so. I felt that my place was at Tamboff, and I accordingly left a land of plenty for poor, desolate Russia. I remember only too vividly those terrible days of famine. At one time my son Alexander had under his charge no less than 33,000 men, women and children, all depending upon him to find them food.

I call to mind one terrible day that brought from Alexander this tragic telegram : " Funds exhausted, send me something, position indescribable." It was terrible, tragic.

All the work done by the Relief Committees was voluntary. The Grand Duchess Constantine fed 2000 people a day.

Even in those days we strove to guard against reckless charitable effort, which can only have a demoralising influence. I call to mind one person who insisted on his name being unknown, offered my son 1000 roubles to be spent in providing food

for the inhabitants of a certain village on the condition that the amount were regarded only as a loan, which should be repaid and subsequently spent on that same village for educational purposes. This donor was doubly a donor by the proviso he made.

It was a tragedy to see splendid men in the prime of their lives, walking about with stony faces and hollow eyes. With them were women clothed only in wretched rags, and little children shivering in the cold wind. They would crowd round the relief parties, which drove about in sledges, holding out their hands saying :

" We have sold our last horses, cows and sheep, we have pawned all our winter clothing ; we have nothing left to sell. We eat but once a day, stewed cabbage and stewed pumpkin, and many of us have not eaten that."

This was true. There were some among them who had not tasted food for days. It was agonising to hear these poor people pleading to us for mercy lest they die of starvation. As they spoke in dull voices, tears would spring up into the eyes of strong men and course slowly down their cheeks into their rough beards; but there were no complaints, no cries, just the slow, monotonous chant, broken by the sobs of worn-out mothers and the cries of hungry children.

We had neither wood nor coal, only straw and the refuse of stables, for fuel. The Volga was frozen, and in some provinces corn was absolutely unprocurable.

In that great calamity the help given by the English Society of Friends was very remarkable.

MY SON, ALEXANDER NOVIKOFF

After some preliminary enquiry, I was invited to attend a Committee Meeting. There were, I think, between twenty and thirty present, and I was the only woman. A series of questions was addressed to me about the state of things in Russia. I exaggerated nothing. I concealed nothing. I told them that an unforeseen blow had befallen sixteen of our provinces and found us unprepared to combat its effects. My son, Alexander Novikoff, was just organising a committee in the district of Kazloff (Tamboff province), and, thanks to him, I knew the question fairly well. "The Friends" listened attentively, but said very little. Mr. Braithwaite, the chairman, only expressed a hope that "God will help our efforts." Nothing more: but without losing a day they went to work, and worked splendidly. They not only collected about £40,000, but sent their delegates—Mr. Edmond Brookes and Mr. William Fox—to distribute their help on the spot amongst the famine-stricken peasantry.

Do you know one of the results of such practical application of sympathy?

It is now generally admitted in my country that unofficial Englishmen are "kind and generous," and, when left to their own true nature, are capable of being friends deserving trust and confidence.

I also received, quite unsolicited, liberal subscriptions from friends in the City, which enabled me to send without delay much needed relief to the starving peasants in my district of Tamboff. The "English bread," as they called it, is remembered and spoken of even now.

Perhaps the best description of that terrible

famine, and of the efforts to relieve it, is that recorded in an interview with me by the representative of *The Week's News*, which I therefore transcribe, the more so because that enterprising journal sent out a special Commission to our famine districts to report upon the situation there. Here is the interview :

"Novo Alexandrofka,
"*12th February*, 1892.

"A beautiful night drive across the snow from Bogojawlensky brought me to Madame Olga Novikoff's estate during Wednesday night. The thermometer stood at 36 degs. Fahrenheit below freezing point, yet the air was so calm that the cold was scarcely noticeable. A heavy hoar frost covered the trees, and the slight mist gave a weird aspect to the desert of snow that stretched away on every side. Without a house on the horizon to direct him, the *jamschick* drove out into the night, and the sledge glided along over the crackling snow.

"Mr. Alexander Novikoff, the son of Madame Olga Novikoff, was at Novo Alexandrofka to welcome me, and put me in a position to judge of the state of things in his district of the Tambov Government. He is Zemski Natchalnick, and very popular amongst the peasants whose little differences he has to judge.

"In the early morning we started off to visit the hospital in the village of Tooriévo. After all that has been said of the condition of Russian hospitals at this moment I was agreeably surprised, both at the cleanliness and the absence of patients whose

illnesses might be directly attributed to the famine. I, however, found there the first case of hunger typhus that I have seen, and learned from the surgeon, Dr. Malof, that in one village close at hand there were no fewer than 150 similar cases.

"This is one of the strongest proofs of the hardships through which the people are now passing. It is the disease that always follows in the wake of war and famine, and although the mortality amongst those seized is relatively small, the fact that numerous cases are occurring is significant. They arise from stomach disorders, brought on by insufficient aud bad food, and the disease then takes the course of ordinary typhus.

"Tooriévo is a long straggling village, and contains about 1000 huts. The harvest in the neighbourhood was fairly good, and the population will probably weather the storm. Another large village in the district, Céslavino, with its 7000 inhabitants, is suffering intensely, the majority of the inhabitants being in receipt of relief. I found a particularly bad state of things in the village of Spasskoe. Amongst the 1500 inhabitants there were but three huts in which there was sufficient corn to keep the occupants till the next harvest. Most of the families are already receiving help from the Government, and the private committee presided over by M. Novikoff.

"I will mention but few cases in this village where the monotony of misery is so apparent in the deserted street and the dilapidated huts. This is the only village I have visited in this neighbourhood where the uniformity of distress compares

with the village in the south of Tambov that I described last week.

"Paul Axenoff is the head of a family of nine, comprised of two old people, Axenoff and his wife, and five children. They were receiving aid from both the authorities and the committee, but they had run through everything except three pounds of bread that was to last them for some weeks to come. The same thing happened to them last month, and in spite of all their efforts to secure food they ate nothing for three days prior to the last delivery of the month's flour.

"The horse and cow have both been sold, and the outhouses pulled down and used for fuel. Straw is usually employed in Russia for heating, but this year there is none, so the peasants are glad to find anything to burn. There is very little wood in this part of the country, and what there is is young, and has evidently been planted by the landowners. With the exception of a sheepskin cloak worn by one of the boys who came in from school while I was in the hut, the members of Axenoff's family had nothing to wear but the rags in which they stood.

"In this hut I discovered a fresh article of food—a soup made of hot water and weeds. They didn't eat it for the good it might do them, but simply for the sake of having something hot. At another hut in this village I found a similar concoction made with boiling water and chopped-up hay.

"All the bread I found in the next hovel was broken, and had been begged from house to house. The occupants had burnt the wood, straw, and outhouses they had at the beginning of the winter, and

were now pulling the straw from the roof over their heads to keep the hut warm.

" Although this was a new-fashioned hut, that is, one with a chimney, the occupants had stopped this up to prevent the fire burning too quickly, and to keep the heat in. This caused the suffocating smoke and tar-like odour that is found in the chimneyless huts.

" On leaving this place we struggled through the snow to visit another house from which the roof had been torn, and which was almost embedded in the quantity of snow that the gale of the previous night had whirled round it. The mayor of the village, who accompanied me, told me that the family of five persons included a dying woman, and two children down with scarlatina.

" With some difficulty we struggled through the four or five feet of snow that barricaded the door, and on getting it open we found the outer part of the hut half filled with snow that had been driven through the unthatched roof. We had some trouble to open the door leading to the inner room, and when this was done the mayor seemed surprised to find that the place was tenantless.

" He enquired amongst the neighbours what had become of Nicolas Semine and his dying wife. Nobody knew, and all were lost in surmise as to what might have happened had they been driven forth by the storm of the previous night. We continued the tour, and half an hour later I came upon a scene the like of which I hope never to see again.

" Eight or ten persons were crowded into a hovel

not more than ten feet square. An unconscious woman had been leaned against the brick stove to keep her warm in the stifling atmosphere. On the ground several dirty and ragged children were playing around two suffering creatures, whose arms and faces were masses of sores. I had already taken in these details when my guide told me this was Semine's dying wife and scarlatina-stricken children, that a man he pointed out was Semine himself, and that the ten-year-old boy lying on the stove was his eldest child.

"I was not able to understand how the father and this boy brought the dying, and now unconscious, woman and the two children through the storm of the previous night. I had myself had an experience of the blinding violence of clouds of snow blown across the plains by a hurricane.

"The story of the refugees is a very sad one; I will tell it just as it was told me. Between the time the harvest failed and the time the authorities commenced to aid the family, they had been obliged to sell everything they possessed to get food, and to pull down the outbuildings for firing purposes. The wife had been ill since autumn, and to keep the place warm they had been obliged to burn first the table, then the benches, then the old clothes, and last of all, to pull the straw from the roof and burn it.

"Yesterday they had nothing. No food, no firing, and the wind drove the snow through the unthatched house. To have stayed was certain death, so they wandered out into the night and were taken into the house where I saw them on condition that they consented to the four walls of their hut being

pulled down and used to heat the hovel in which they had taken refuge. They brought no food with them, and the family of four persons which has taken them in had just five pounds of bread to last till the end of February.

"In the hut occupied by Timothy Metchariakof I was shown some *lebeda* flour which the peasants often mix with rye or maize flour thinking that it gives nourishment to the bread. The fact that there are quantities of *lebeda* this winter is another sign of famine. Whenever the crops fail the weed from which the grains of *lebeda* are thrashed is found in abundance.

"In spite of what the peasants say about the satisfying properties of these seeds, the doctors consider the flour made from them most injurious to the health. All sorts of stomach complaints can be traced to the consumption of bread of which it is an ingredient.

"The bread was very black everywhere, but as long as this blackness resulted from the use of rye flour it was not unhealthy, and the bread although rather bitter was not uneatable. In many houses, however, the people had mixed anything that came to hand with the flour served out to them, and the bread consequently suffered.

"I tasted some this morning in which cinders or grit was undoubtedly one of the ingredients. It is also generally very badly baked, and if the authorities can improve on the official bakers I have seen, there should certainly be a public bakery in each village, as many of the sufferers have not sufficient fire in their stoves properly to cook anything.

Disease will go on increasing even more rapidly than famine if this unhealthy food is eaten by the peasants.

"I visited a great many of the families in this village so as to be satisfied that I was not basing my judgment of the distress on exceptional cases. The misery I found was very widespread, and actual starvation is only avoided by the aid of the Zemstvo and M. Novikoff's committee. If these aids were stopped for a week, nine-tenths of the village would be starving.

"From Spasskoe I drove across to the little village of Dolguinko, where I found a part of the population living in holes dug in the earth. Towards the end of last autumn, one half of the village was burned to the ground. The work of rebuilding had scarcely commenced when winter set in, and those peasants who were not able to lay beams and branches over their partially-built huts and thus make a roof, dug holes in the ground in which they are now living with their families.

"To reach these burrows it was necessary to follow a long passage cut in the snow, at the end of which was a hole through which the visitor was supposed to let himself, legs first, and then steady his descent by catching at the snow till he felt the ground beneath his feet. I did all this, and am not certain whether I was not more astonished at my safe arrival than the occupants of the hole were to see me.

"Beyond the difficulties of entrance and exit the hole is no darker than an ordinary hut. But a more horribly insanitary place of abode for human

beings it would be hard to find. As could only be expected, it was very damp, and the occupants were condemned to stand and sit in several inches of mud, and to support the drippings of the snow melted by the heat of their fire. However they manage to live with insufficient nutriment amid such surroundings I cannot imagine. The man in one of these burrows that I visited was making wooden boots, for which he could earn a penny a pair. If he worked very hard he could make two pairs a day.

"On returning to Novo Alexandrofka, I looked over the books of the district of which these villages form part. It comprises twenty-five villages, with a total of 60,000 inhabitants. How many of these are relieved by the authorities cannot be said, but M. Novikoff's Committee has supplemented the efforts of the Government by feeding 10,436 persons during the month of January. Each one of these 10,436 persons was the recipient of twenty-five pounds of flour.

"According to the inventories made of the possessions of every inhabitant of the district, the number of destitute, unprovided for by Government relief, will increase by more than 1000 a month, and will reach 18,000 by June. The committee has already distributed 650,000 pounds of flour since its institution. As many Britons have aided this work by funds sent to Madame Olga Novikoff, it will interest them to know what is doing.

"In the village of Novo Alexandrofka no one is in receipt of relief. Thanks to M. Novikoff, who has endowed it with elementary, secondary, and adult

schools, it is a particularly happy village, and counts 800 teetotalers in a population of 900 persons.

"Before leaving the Tambov Government, I may say that although in certain villages the want is appalling, and is rendered more palpable by the condition in which the inhabitants live, I do not anticipate an overwhelming disaster in this province. It is well served by railway lines, though the companies have little rolling stock, and grain can be easily conveyed to these central Governments if it is in the country, and has been brought to some available spot before the thaw."

On a second occasion, when the present War Charities began to press for support, the same kind friends in the City and elsewhere, who had helped during the Russian famine, again came forward and collected for me a handsome sum. Part of this money I had the satisfaction of distributing to Russian, British and Serbian Red Cross funds. A part also (2000 roubles) was sent as a Christmas present to the wounded soldiers in H.I.M.'s Hospital at Petrograd, in gracious acknowledgment of which I received the following telegram from the Empress Marie :

"Am greatly touched by your letter and your generous gift, for which I wish you to express to all those who have contributed my warmest thanks. MARIE."

From the Princess Helène (daughter of the King of Serbia), to whom I had also sent a small sum, came the following telegram ;

"Best thanks for your generous gift—profoundly touched—affectionate greeting."

And from Monseigneur Cyril, Bishop of Tamboff, came his acknowledgment of my remittance:

"Generous gift received—great joy—many thanks and blessings."

The Grand Duchess Elizabeth, who is at the head of so many charitable institutions in Moscow, and takes such an active interest in good work there, also very kindly acknowledged the small sum sent to her. All these remittances were kindly telegraphed for me by Monsieur de Helpert, the obliging Director of the Russian Bank for Foreign Trade.

Amongst other remittances to Petrograd was one of £50 to Lady Sybil Grey, who was at the head of a Red Cross branch there, and respecting the safe transmission of which I had consulted her father, Earl Grey, who replied to me with the necessary advice, and concluded his letter with very warm acknowledgments of the kind and hearty reception his daughter had met with in Petrograd.

Later on I had the additional satisfaction of raising a further sum for War Charities by the raffle of a Diamond Ornament, for which purpose my friend, Lady Primrose, lent me her house as well as her valuable personal aid.

The above are a few illustrations, among others that might be added, of the British warm-heartedness and generosity that never fails in time of need.

CHAPTER X

MUSICAL MEMORIES

My Mother—Her Musical Friends—I Study with Masset—His Generous Offer—Litolff's Visit—My Mother's Musicales Develop into a Conservatoire—Rubinstein's Anger—His Refusal to Play for the Grand Duchess Helen—The Idols of the Musical World—A Friendly Jealousy—My Stratagem with Liszt—Glazounoff's Kindness—The Musicless

OUR great poets Pouschkin and Lermontoff admired my mother's beauty; Yazikoff also wrote a lovely poem in which he says that

> The ancient Greeks would have delighted
> To kneel and worship at your feet,
> To build you shrines of snowy marble,
> Where clouds of fragrant incense sweet,
> From golden altars night and morning,
> Would rise your image fair to greet.

But my mother was not merely beautiful, she was also exceedingly kind and very artistic. The great musician and pianist Thalberg dedicated to her one of his lovely nocturnes, and I afterwards inherited Liszt's kindness for her memory. In the year 1860 my mother used to invite to our house every Thursday first-rate musicians like Nicolas Rubinstein (as fine a pianist as his brother Anton), eminent violinists like Laub and Wieniawski, the 'cellist Cossman, and other celebrated instru-

NICOLAS RUBINSTEIN

ANTON RUBINSTEIN

mentalists, from whom we heard, with greatest enjoyment, examples of the finest classical music, which lasted from eight to ten. At ten the young people were allowed to dance, and I am ashamed to say that my young friends much preferred the second part of the evening to the first!

A year or two after my marriage, having (as mentioned in a previous chapter) been ordered by my parents-in-law to accompany them to Paris, I duly obeyed, and I think I may say that my life there was unique. From ten in the morning till ten in the evening, I almost invariably stayed with the old people, sitting with them in the Bois, or laying a "Patience" (the only one I know) at home. I gained, however, one great benefit. I managed to take daily singing lessons at the Conservatoire at half-past eight in the morning, from the celebrated Masset, who took great interest in my progress.

But at last my time was over, for I had to rejoin my husband and my boy in Petrograd. When I told Professor Masset that I was taking my last lesson, he seemed greatly surprised.

"Oh!" he said, "I guess why you are stopping your lessons. But you are wrong. I will give you lessons gratis for two years, on condition that you make your début in Grand Opéra. One reason why I ask high fees is in order not to be besieged by too many pupils."

"Well," said I, "of course twenty-five francs per lesson is a large sum for daily lessons, but that is not my reason. I am unfortunately obliged to interrupt my studies for another reason, my husband wants me to return home."

The Professor looked perfectly horrified. "Your husband! Are you then married?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I am," I answered, "and I have a son."

"*Voilà une surprise!*" he cried. "And does your husband sing well?"

"Oh no, he does not sing at all."

"Then what does he do?"

I had to explain as well as I could my husband's position, to which Masset impatiently retorted, "Well, I only wish I had not taken such pains with your lessons!" which I thought more frank than polite, but the poor Professor was disappointed to find that he had been wasting his time on a mere amateur.

In order to practise singing without disturbing my old people, I took a little mansarde in the same house, and, when hidden there, the concierge had my order to say I was out. One afternoon, I went to my piano and was studying hard Gluck's "Orpheus," when suddenly, there was a violent knock at my door.

"Won't you let me in?" cried a voice. "Your stupid concierge insisted that you were out, but I heard your voice, which I recognised. Let me come in, I am Henri Litolff."

I opened the door, but I said, "You see that I have only a piano and one chair. I cannot receive visitors."

"I will take the chair, and will accompany you," was the answer. And then we had a charming improvised concert.

My mother's musical parties led to an important result. Struck by their success, Nicolas Rubinstein

and his friend the millionaire Tretiakoff, conceived the idea of founding a Conservatorium in Moscow. My dear native town is very enthusiastic and generous when she realises the importance of a great idea. A foundation for a Moscow Conservatorium was immediately arranged, whilst Nicolas Rubinstein's elder brother, Anton, submitted the same idea to the Grand Duchess Helen, who at once identified herself with a similar project for Petrograd. Thus we came to possess two Conservatoriums, with the two brothers Rubinstein as their Principals, Anton in Petrograd, Nicolas in Moscow, to the great adornment of both capitals.

In that enterprise the Grand Duchess Helen showed her true grandeur. And here again, as in the question of the emancipation of the serfs, she found a great supporter in her nephew the Grand Duke Constantine Nicolaievitch. I should like any English travellers who visit Moscow and Petrograd to make a point of seeing these two Conservatoriums, of which we certainly may be proud.

I continued to be on good terms with both the Rubinsteins, and the Grand Duchess Helen often invited Anton to her parties. But one evening something happened which was far from pleasant. Whilst Rubinstein was playing one of his lovely compositions, a young fellow very "well born," but very badly brought up, began turning on his heels muttering in an audible tone something about "Rubin, Rubin, Rubin" (inflamed, I was told, by jealousy in connection with a young girl who was extremely enthusiastic about the artist). Rubinstein stopped playing and left the palace. The next

day he called on Baroness Rhaden, lady-in-waiting to the Grand Duchess, and said, "The Grand Duchess is kind enough to offer me 2000 roubles for my performances; I must decline that payment, as also the honour of playing again at the palace. I am quite ready to play to the Grand Duchess when she is alone, but not otherwise."

A few days later the Grand Duchess sent for me. "Is it true," she said, "that the bear is playing at your house every Thursday?"

"The bear! Madame, do you by chance mean Rubinstein? If so, yes, he plays for me every Thursday."

"Well but, how do you manage to tame him? Do you know that he actually refuses to play at my palace on any terms?"

"The only thing I can suppose, Madame, is that, although I have no grandees to lend attraction to my receptions, my artist friends, like Rubinstein, Wieniawski, Litolff, etc., always meet with an attentive hearing—they are always accorded complete silence."

"Yes, but Rubinstein should understand that what occurred at the palace the other night was quite an unfortunate and exceptional mischance."

The Grand Duchess, as she looked at me, was evidently very angry, nor did she hasten to invite Rubinstein again. But very much later the storm subsided, and peace was restored.

The brothers Rubinstein were, naturally, the idols of the Russian musical world. In Petrograd it was Anton whose reputation was highest. In Moscow Nicolas was considered the superior. A

friendly jealousy on behalf of the two great musicians existed between the two cities. Anton in his later years had a charming villa at Peterhof where I have met also his wife and family. I remember that, at the conclusion of a discussion on Wagner's magnificent, but lengthy, Music Dramas, Rubinstein said he doubted whether anyone could listen to music with real attention and enjoyment for more than two hours at a time. A frank admission! But was he not right? He also endorsed Paganini's dictum about the necessity of daily study. "If I do not practise one day I notice it. If I do not practise two days, the public notice it." One of his friends and collaborateurs was Leopold Auer, who was for so long principal Violin Professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, and to whose eminent talent the world owes so much.

Amongst other well-known musicians whom I have known in my earlier years, were Litolff (already mentioned, who, like Thalberg, dedicated a composition to my mother), Ferdinand Hiller, Halevy, Stockhausen, Ole Bull, Madame Pauline Viardot, Liszt, Tchaikovsky and others.

I knew Liszt well in Weimar, where I spent a few weeks. Once when he called on me at the Hôtel de Russie, I happened to be changing my dress after a long walk. As I began to hurry my toilette, I heard enchanting sounds from my piano below. Judge of my delight to be listening to Liszt's improvisations. Instead, therefore, of hurrying, I prolonged my change of dress to what I considered would be the extremity of my visitor's patience. But I found him friendly and smiling, not in the least annoyed, when

I at last entered the room. Indeed, he evidently guessed why I had delayed so long, and was even amused at my little stratagem.

Here is a letter from him :

MADAME,

Le charme et l'émotion de votre chant m'a fait complètement oublier hier que je n'étais pas libre de mes heures aujourd'hui. Veuillez bien m'accorder indulgence et me permettre de venir un autre jour pour vous renouveler mes très respectueux hommages ?

FR. LISZT.

It was Liszt also who introduced to me Lassen, who came every morning to teach me his lovely songs. In Weimar, Lassen was quite an artistic personage.

But I might ramble on for ever with such reminiscences. A few words only about later acquaintances in London. Amongst these I think I ought specially to mention my distinguished compatriots, Glazounoff and Safonoff.

Tchaikovsky was also here and had fully intended to return to London, where his glorious music had become so popular, and had indeed accepted the invitation of an English friend to be his guest during the forthcoming visit. His death in Petrograd occurred shortly afterwards, to our great loss.

On one of Glazounoff's visits I had a small musical gathering, at which the young Russian 'cellist, Varia Irmanoff, was to play her composition "Volga" (Air Russe pour Violoncelle), which she had dedicated to me. Unfortunately her accompanist never turned

up. Glazounoff, seeing the poor girl's embarrassment, then went very quietly to the piano and said, "I will accompany you." Very Russian in kindness and simplicity! I was proud of him.

A few minutes later, when my other pianist, the talented Miss Vera Margolies, came, Glazounoff seemed delighted to meet his favourite Russian artist-friend, just returned from new successes in Paris, and about to achieve another success at the Queen's Hall under the direction of our great Safonoff.

I must add a few words on Mrs. Rosa Newmarch. She has rendered great service to the artistic world in publishing her two big volumes on our great Tchaikovsky, and her works on *The Russian Opera* and *The Russian Arts*, and we Russians must always think of Mrs. Rosa Newmarch's efforts to bring about an artistic entente between Russia and England.

Safonoff, that grand artist so well known to London orchestras and audiences, used, in his lighter moments, to amuse us with his inimitable six-line caricatures on the back of menu cards, or on any handy scraps of paper.

In these later years I used frequently to meet that grand violinist August Wilhelmj, and shall never forget the rather rare examples he gave us of his extraordinary gift of tone, in that respect reminding me somewhat of Laub.

I used also to meet Auer on his occasional visits here, during which he introduced to me his celebrated pupils, Kathleen Parlow and Mischa Elman, who have since won world-wide fame.

Ernest De Munck, the eminent Belgian violon-

cellist, formerly married to Carlotta Patti, I knew very well during his last residence in Londen, and often heard him perform on his beautiful "Strad." He had made his reputation throughout the world, and after the death in Paris of his celebrated wife, he spent his last years in London. We had many mutual friends in the musical world of former days.

The above are some of the *dii majori* of the musical profession past and present. But there is also much excellent amateur talent in English Society, to which I have often listened with real enjoyment. On the other hand, I must confess that some of my best friends have shown a conspicuous absence of "music in the soul," though far from being on that account "fit for treason's stratagems and spoils!" I need hardly repeat my well-known story of dear Kinglake, who used to be unutterably bored by music, and frankly admitted that, of all instruments, he preferred the drum! His attitude was, I suppose, somewhat like that of your celebrated Dr. Johnson, whose attention was called at a musical party (at which no doubt he unwillingly found himself) to a *tour de force* of an eminent performer on the violin. "Is it not wonderful?" said an ardent listener. "I wish, sir, it were impossible," replied the grim Doctor.

CHAPTER XI

THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

A Fatal Treaty—Gladstone's Opinion—The Concert of Europe—The Unspeakable Turk and His Methods—England's Responsibility—Mr. Gladstone's Energetic Action—Lord Rosebery Resigns—Gladstone's Astounding Letter—"I Shall Keep Myself to Myself"—"Abdul the Damned"—"A Man whose every Impulse is Good"—The Convention of Cyprus—Russia and England

THERE is an old and cynical saying that no lawyer draws up an agreement or contract without an eye to the future. If ever a document left trouble for the future it was the Berlin Treaty. The clause referring to Armenia was tantamount to handing over the wretched Armenians to the Turks; for the Concert of Europe, that misbegotten child of the Treaty of Paris, has failed consistently in its futile endeavours.

The contention of Russia has never been better expressed than by Gladstone in a letter to me dated January 2, 1877, in which he wrote: "A guarantee dependent on the Turk for its execution becomes thereby no guarantee at all." Again, on February 6, he wrote: "The real issue, so far as I can see, will arise when the question shall assume this form: Is Russia to be left alone to execute the will and work of Europe?" This is exactly what Russia did in 1876, unless it be contended that the "will of Europe" sanctioned the wholesale massacre of

harmless citizens by the very power ordained to protect them—the Ruling Power.

The Sublime Porte has been as consistent as the Concert of Europe in evading its responsibilities, and it is needless to say that it as carefully refrained from carrying out its undertaking with regard to Armenia as the Powers on their part did from insisting on the reforms. Possibly the argument of the Concert was that, as there were no "ameliorations and reforms" on the part of the Sublime Porte, there was no opportunity for them to "superintend their application."

None of us who knew the Turk had any doubts as to the truth of the atrocities at Sassoun. These things were too common. The scale differed, the crime was always the same. And what was it?

The crime was the establishment—or the re-establishment—of Turkish Mussulman authority over a Christian race. If that were the crime, who were the criminals? On that point I should like to be allowed to say some plain truths, hoping that my English friends will tolerate the candour in others which they never hesitate to practise themselves. The real criminals who were responsible for the atrocities which horrified the civilised world were not the Kurds—who at first got all the blame. The criminals who perpetrated the massacre were Turkish regular troops, commanded by Turkish officers acting in direct obedience to explicit orders from the Turkish Government.

But although the direct complicity of the "Sublime" Porte in these hideous crimes was not disputed even by the Pashas of Stamboul, it was

not with them that the responsibility of these horrors originally lay.

The crime at Sassoun lay primarily at the door of Disraeli. It was one of the many disastrous results of that "peace with honour" which Mr. Gladstone had the courage to describe as a peace that was no peace, with the honour that prevailed among thieves.

That may seem to be a hard saying to those who do not know the facts. To those who do it will be a mere truism.

Why was it that the Armenians at Sassoun were left as sheep before the butcher? Why was it that the Sultan and his Pashas felt themselves perfectly free to issue what order they pleased for the massacre of the poor Armenians? The answer is, unfortunately, only too simple. It was because England at the Berlin Congress, and *England alone*—for none of the other Powers took any interest in the matter—destroyed the security which Russia had extorted from the Turkish Government at San Stéfano, and substituted for the sterling guarantee of Russia the worthless paper-money of Ottoman promises. Was it not, then, England's doing that these poor wretches were outraged and murdered by the rulers, to whose tender mercies England insisted upon consigning them?

Let me prove my case: In the treaty of San Stéfano, the Turkish Government entered into a direct and explicit obligation to Russia to guarantee the security of the Armenians.

Article 16 of the Treaty of San Stéfano runs thus:

"As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory which they occupy in Armenia, and which is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to conflicts and complications detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte engages to carry into effect without further delay the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security from Kurds and Circassians."

Now, it is obvious that this clause imposed clear and precise obligations not only upon Turkey, but also upon Russia. If the reforms were not carried out, if the security of the Armenians were not guaranteed, Russia would have been bound to interfere, and *would have interfered*, to compel the Turks to carry out their treaty obligations.

This article seemed to the British plenipotentiaries to give Russia a virtual protectorate over Armenia, and therefore they insisted upon striking it out. The poor Armenians were forbidden to look for their protection to the strong arm of the Tsar. The Turks were delivered from their express obligation to guarantee the security of their Armenian subjects, and it was calmly decreed that the Armenians should be content with Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty. That clause ran as follows:

"The Sublime Porte engages to realise without delay those ameliorations and reforms which local needs require in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and the Kurds. It undertakes to make known, from time to time, the measures taken

with this object to the Powers, who will watch over their application."

Mark the difference. In place of a positive obligation entered into with the only Power near enough and strong enough to enforce the fulfilment of treaty engagements, there was substituted this engagement, over the execution of which the Powers, in their beneficence, promised to watch: as the execution has never begun, the Powers were not overburdened with much "watching." "Waiting" rather expresses what they did—waiting for the Turks to begin the fulfilment of the promises which they made to collective Europe years and years ago. They are waiting still. Meanwhile the Armenians were massacred, as, for example, at Sassoun, and not there only. But even this did not exhaust the criminal responsibility of Lord Beaconsfield. He had taken Cyprus as a material pledge for the execution of reforms in Asiatic Turkey. But there were no reforms in Asiatic Turkey. The only effect of the Anglo-Turkish Convention was to increase the confidence of the Sultan that he could do as he pleased in Armenia, Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty notwithstanding.

England, therefore, was responsible in three ways. She destroyed the Russian guarantee exacted by the Treaty of San Stéfano. She framed the worthless "watching" clause of the Berlin Treaty, and then, to preclude all possibility of effective pressure upon the Turk, she concluded the Cyprus Convention, which established an illegal* British protectorate over the Asiatic dominions of the Sultan.

At Sassoun was seen the result of that policy. No amount of dispatch-writing, friendly advice, or admonition would improve the condition of the Armenians. Remonstrances were idle. What was wanted was action. But who could act? No Power could occupy and administer Armenia but Russia. Unfortunately, she had no wish and no obligation now to undertake so arduous and so thankless a task. But who else was to do it?

No one did it; for Russia had once played St. George and Europe had thrown back the maiden to the dragon.

When I heard of the Armenian massacres in 1894, I was more horrified than surprised. When the full confirmation of the horrible news arrived, it made my heart sick. What was even worse, if that were possible, was the fact that the relations between England and Russia were strained. All Mr. Gladstone's energies were concentrated upon urging on Lord Salisbury's Ministry the coercion of the Sultan, single-handed if need be. The result was Lord Rosebery's resignation as Leader of the Liberal Party in the Lords, as a protest against a policy that in his opinion could not fail to plunge Europe into war.

Prince Lobanoff, who was responsible for Russia's policy of opposition to armed intervention against Turkey, aroused Mr. Gladstone's indignation, and I came in for a share of his wrath by virtue of my defence of Prince Lobanoff. At that time Mr. Gladstone wrote to me:

HAWARDEN CASTLE,
October 18th, 1895.

It is most kind of you to waste powder on an outcast like me; an outcast first from active life; secondly I feel—from your scheme of opinion I cannot read your articles—not because I deal so little with newspaper print, but because I am afraid of disagreeing with you, and in this case I prefer ignorance to strife. I am, you see, possessed with an idea as to the truer mode of dealing with the Sultan and his accursed system, founded upon my experience in the year 1880—when we received most valuable and effective aid from your good and great Emperor Alexander II.

Now I have no power and little knowledge—and my imagined knowledge may be all wrong. It is to this effect:

(1) That Lord Salisbury is not up to the mark in all points, but that he is the best of those who have the matter in their hands. The best there is at the moment to do the work.

(2) That he is held back by others—not to act, say, according to rumour, most by Russia.

If this is so it is most painful, for this Armenian case is the very worst of all that has yet happened, and if the Powers are beaten by the Sultan, whom every one of them can crush with the little finger, they will be deservedly covered with indelible disgrace.

There is plain speaking for you.

It was; but I replied soothingly, trying to put to him Russia's case. His reply electrified Europe. It ran:

October 22nd, 1895.

My dear Madame Novikoff,

In these sad circumstances I am so far comforted as to believe that there is no occasion for controversy between you and me. We have in some critical circumstances heartily co-operated, and I think we have the same sentiments as to Armenia.

I shall carefully and for many reasons keep myself to myself.

I see in *The Times* that the wretched Sultan, whom God has given as a curse to mankind, waving his flag of triumph, and the adversaries at his feet are Russia, France and England.

As to the division of the shame amongst them, I care little. Except that I hope that my own country, and for its good, be made conscious and be exhibited to the world for its own full share—whatever that may be.

May God in His mercy send a speedy end to the grinning Turk and all his doings. So I said when I could say, and could even sometimes do, so I say in my political decrepitude and even death.

Always yours sincerely,

W. E. Gladstone.

This letter was the sensation of the hour. Here are some of the English press comments upon it: "An extraordinary letter," "the sensation of the hour," "startling vehemence," "now famous letter,"

" essentially Gladstonian," " silly and wicked balderdash," " ring of life and strength," " shameful letter," " Tory papers are terribly shocked," " has startled the civilised world."

When I returned from Russia to England in 1896, one of the first things I saw on reaching London was " Plain words to the Assassin," in large letters on the newspaper posters, staring down upon me from the hoardings, and I found people still telling each other what a dreadful fellow the Turk really was !

Plain words, strong words, fierce words was the diet presented to the Sultan in varied diplomatic sauces ; but the dish was always the same, and his response was quite as monotonous. To empty words, plain or flavoured, he replied by massacres, and this seemed likely to go on for ever. For us this *passe-temps* was monotony. To the poor Armenian, alas, it is death !

I rejoiced to see that the English nation was weary of the vaticinations of diplomatists, and was urgently demanding not words, but deeds. It reminded me of 1876, that great year when so many brave attempts were made to change its traditional policy—attempts which, unfortunately, met with but partial success. And above all I rejoiced to hear once more sounding deep and loud, like the great bell of our grand Kremlin, above the general hubbub, the commanding note of Mr. Gladstone's voice—that voice through which the heart and conscience of nations has so often found utterance.

But although in some respects like 1876, there was this difference, which, as a Russian, I felt more keenly than any one. In 1876 Russia led, and

though no other Power followed, we fought, we suffered, we triumphed! In the Armenian question the initiative of chivalrous action was no longer ours, and bitterly I regretted it. It did not seem, however, to have passed into any other hands. But that made things worse. Why was it that Russia was not as in 1876? The answer was easy. Because of the Treaty of 1878.

Mr. Gladstone lamented and condemned the policy of Prince Lobanoff. With the lament I concurred. From the condemnation I dissented. Prince Lobanoff's policy in Turkey was inevitable. The responsibility for that departure from our traditional policy rested with England, and it was for England to say how long it should continue.

The vividness with which England's Armenian agitation brought 1876 back to my mind also recalled not less vividly, the hideous disillusionment of 1878; and I had reason. For through these years of trial and of triumph I did my utmost to persuade my countrymen that England was Mr. Gladstone and not Lord Beaconsfield. The generous enthusiasm of St. James's Hall made me wrongly suppose that it was equivalent to a resolute reversal of England's traditional policy. But when we had made our sacrifices and settling day came, we found, alas! to our cost, that England was Lord Beaconsfield after all, and not Mr. Gladstone. Imagine the reproaches that were addressed to me! No one can ever realise the reproaches I addressed to myself.

We were not likely to make that mistake again. We were no more to be deluded with words than the

Sultan was to be coerced with adjectives. We looked at facts—hard, disagreeable, ugly though they were—and adjusted our policy accordingly.

The first fact was the Sultan. In 1896 England called him "the Assassin" and the "accursed." Mr. William Watson even went to the length of referring to him as "Abdul the Damned." But England, alas! saved him in 1878, and she gloried in the deed. When Lord Salisbury reported from Berlin the net result of English diplomacy at the Congress, he boasted that it had "restored, with due security for good government (!), a very large territory to the Government of the Sultan," and that the alterations made in our Treaty of San Stéfano tended "powerfully to secure from external assault the stability and independence of his Empire."

It is difficult to repress a bitter smile when recalling the positive assurances which were given to Europe by Lord Beaconsfield as to the "angelic" character of Abdul Hamid, who was then England's *protégé*, England's ally, England's favourite.

Russia maintained that no Sultan could be trusted to protect Christian subjects, and Mr. Gladstone concurred. Everywhere there must be a guarantee. Either the populations must be freed entirely from his rule or an outside Power must superintend and enforce the execution of reforms. England met this with a flat refusal. She made it the first object of her policy to restore the direct uncontrolled authority of the Sultan over as wide a territory as possible, and Lord Beaconsfield exulted in the fatal success of that policy for many reasons, but especially for one, which most of my English

friends seem to have forgotten, but which Russians, being the sufferers, do not forget so easily.

Lord Beaconsfield was sure he had done right because the Sultan was such "a good man." On his return from Berlin, in his speech at the Mansion House (July 27, 1898) he gave the following testimonial to Abdul Hamid—the hero of to-day:

"I look to the individual character of that human being as of vast importance. He is a man whose every impulse is good. However great may be the difficulties he has to encounter, however various may be the influences that may ultimately control him, his impulses are always good. He is not a tyrant, he is not dissolute. He is not a bigot. He is not corrupt."

The comments of the Young Turks on this pronouncement would be interesting.

England had her way. Abdul Hamid, "whose every impulse was good," reigned by virtue of his action in 1878 over regions from which Russia had driven him out. But that was not all. England deliberately spoiled, as may be seen by reference to the protocols of the Congress, every stipulation made to compel the Sultan to keep his word. His "impulses were so good" it would be cruel to make provision for the proper execution of his treaty obligations! He must be left unhampered and uncontrolled. England rejected Russian proposals to impose upon all contracting parties the mutual duty of controlling the stipulations of the treaty because the Porte objected to allow within its own limits the control of other States. That was not to be thought of. The Sultan must be left free and

uncontrolled to obey those "good impulses" of which Lord Beaconsfield was so well assured. Thus it is that Europe was paralysed over the Armenian massacres.

In face of such a situation which had thus been created, and in the midst of an impotence which was prepared in advance at the Berlin Congress, Russia was overwhelmed with denunciations because she did not remain true to the crusading policy of 1876. This hardly seemed to me to be what in England you call "fair play."

But that was not all. If we had merely to do with the Berlin Treaty, we might have endeavoured to make the best use of the worthless weapons which it contains. Unfortunately, the responsibility of England for the inaction of Russia was far more direct, far more deadly, than this.

For Lord Beaconsfield, and the English people applauded him, with the evil prescience of hatred, foresaw the Armenian massacres, and provided in advance for the paralysing of Russia's generous initiative. He even fixed a date when events would compel Russia to face the necessity of resorting to force to coerce the Sultan, and, as he publicly explained in the heart of the City of London, he regarded it as the crowning achievement of his policy to prevent such action on our part by the solemn public pledge of immediate war by England in that case.

Lord Beaconsfield said :

"Suppose the settlement of Europe had been limited to the mere Treaty of Berlin. What are the probable consequences which would then have

occurred? In ten, fifteen, it might be twenty years [it has been exactly eighteen!] the power of Russia being revived, her resources having again resumed their general strength, some quarrel would again have occurred, Bulgarian or otherwise [Armenian this time], between Turkey and Russia, and in all probability the armies of Russia would have assaulted the Ottoman dominions both in Europe and Asia, enveloping with her armies the city of Constantinople and the powerful position which it occupies. Well, what would have been the probable conduct under these circumstances of the Government of this country?"

This was the vital question for Prince Lobanoff, and the answer to it has shaped the whole policy of Russia.

Lord Beaconsfield continued:

"Whoever might have been the Minister and whatever the party in power, the position of the Government would have been this. There must have been hesitation for a time, there must have been a want of decision and firmness, but no one could doubt that ultimately England would have said: 'This will never do; we must prevent the conquest of Asia Minor and must interfere in this matter to assist because of Russia.' No one, I am sure, in this country who merely considers this question can for a moment doubt that that must have been the ultimate policy of this country."

Therefore, he went on to explain (I summarise the points of a long speech), in order to remove any possible doubt on the subject, the voice of England should be clearly, firmly, and decidedly expressed

in advance, and this he claimed he had effected by the conclusion of the Cyprus Convention. There has to be no more hesitating, doubting and considering "contingencies." England was, once for all, definitely committed to defend the Asiatic frontier of the Ottoman Empire against any advances of the Russian army in any quarrel, "Bulgarian or otherwise."

This, he declared, was "the ultimate policy" of England, and he embodied it for all men to see in the Cyprus Convention. Lord Salisbury had previously described that convention as an undertaking given "fully and unreservedly" to prevent any further encroachments by Russia upon Turkish territory in Asia.

That was plain speaking. The Convention of Cyprus, therefore, was a document prepared to prevent our taking any action for the protection of the Armenians. It meant war—war by England, by sea and land all round the world, against Russia if she advanced a single company of armed police into the valleys of Armenia. With this Convention still in force, who could blame Russia for not joining in operations against Abdul?

Of course I was told—even by Mr. Gladstone himself—that the Cyprus Treaty contained no obligation to protect the Assassin in Armenia except on condition of reforms, and that the Sultan had been informed long ago that the covenant fell to the ground by his breach of faith in not giving the reforms.

This, I confess, was news to me, and in Russia we knew nothing of any such abandonment of the Convention by the English Government.

In those years the Russian people did not move, although they undoubtedly followed with intense interest all the eloquent speeches delivered in England on behalf of the unhappy Armenians, for Russia certainly can never be indifferent to the Christian cause in Turkey. All her policy in the East had that permanent basis. But this time the lead was taken by Great Britain, who was credited with some definite plan of her own. Russia's help was never asked in the *only* way which could be fruitful, and her Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Lobanoff, unhesitatingly expressed his dissent from the half-measures which were proposed, and which would only irritate the Sultan and further injure the cause of the unhappy Armenians—bad enough already.

Thank God, their losses did not amount to the 250,000 lives stated in the English Press ; but even the tenth part is a terrible, terrible slaughter. The poor Armenians would never have risen in rebellion had they not expected from Great Britain the help that the Slavs received from Russia. I suppose our crime is that we did not do Great Britain's work. But really this cannot constitute Russia's duty !

It was at the beginning of 1878, when the long agony of the War of Emancipation in the Balkans and in Armenia was drawing to a close, that I published *Is Russia Wrong ?* It was a protest and an appeal against the fatal superstition that our two countries were natural enemies. The appeal was for the re-establishment of the Russo-English alliance, which seemed to me essential for the best interests of both countries. It was venturesome,

perhaps even audacious, to issue such an appeal when all your arsenals were ringing with preparations for war with Russia, and when Lord Beaconsfield was even completing his arrangements for forcing your fleet up to the gates of Constantinople.

In those days there were few who listened to Russian protests; among these few, however, were the flower of English intellect. My great friend, Mr. J. A. Froude, in an eloquent preface, commended my appeal to the attention of his countrymen. Mr. Carlyle honoured it with his emphatic assurances of support. In fact, it was he who was the first in urging me to republish in book form all my letters on the Anglo-Russian relations. Four years later, when I re-issued the appeal with other matter in my *Russia and England*, M. Emile de Laveleye reviewed it in the *Fortnightly*, but so great was the popular prejudice against Russians, that Mr. Morley would not allow him even to name the author of the book whose proposals were under review. I shall never forget De Laveleye's indignation at having been so roughly treated by the editor. "It is pure despotism," exclaimed he. "People talk of freedom of opinion, and they will not allow you, at the same time, to express that which you most strongly hold! It is despotism and deceit combined. Of all kinds of despotism—the worst," concluded he. I did not contradict my friend, as he was expressing exactly my own views.

Fortunately for me, Mr. Gladstone was not handcuffed in the same way by the editor of the *Nineteenth Century*. He reviewed the book not only at length, but warmly supported my humble plea for

a cordial and good understanding between the two great Empires which dominate Asia. "Every Englishman," said he, with his wonderful outspokenness, "must read this book." His advice may have been followed by some of his party, but I certainly ignominiously failed to convince the Jingoes.

But all this is very long ago and a new era has since opened for Russia and England. I have written this chapter to show what apparently insurmountable obstacles have been overcome to allow Russia and England to join forces in 1914 with the common object of freeing Europe from an intolerable tyranny. In the meantime, poor Armenia suffers as even she has not suffered before, and once more Russia is carrying hope to the hearts of unfortunate Christians ground beneath the Turkish heel.

CHAPTER XII

THE SOBERING OF RUSSIA

Russian Dreamers—Fighting a Curse—First Steps—An Interesting Encounter—A Great Reform—Its Acceptance by the Peasants—The Cabman's interrogative—He Begs me to Intercede with the Tsar—The Temptation of Drink—My Peasant Teas—The Drink Habit—Our Courageous Emperor

THERE are some people who accuse me of being a dreamer, and I confess they are not altogether wrong. For many years I "dreamed" of an Anglo-Russian understanding; it was the great dream of my life. I could have wished that it had been realised without the shedding of rivers of blood and the wasting of tens of thousands of lives; still, I have been spared to see my dream come true, and I can only hope that out of this terrible sacrifice good may come.

Some of my friends were as inveterate dreamers as I, notably Mr. M. Gringmuth, the editor of *The Moscow Gazette*, who, in 1908, announced his determination of struggling energetically against drunkenness in our beloved Russia. "We must convince our Government," he said, "of the absolute necessity of stopping this evil and of finding better sources of revenue—sources more worthy of a great country."

I remember with what thankfulness I read these patriotic words. In alcohol I saw a greater enemy

to Russia than Nihilism and all its kindred influences. It was the secret enemy eating into our country's very vitals. Then came the day when, with a stroke of the pen, our Tsar did the greatest thing that any monarch has ever done for his subjects—he killed the foe that had been for generations menacing millions of homes.

There have been many dreamers in Russia who, like Mr. Gringmuth, have fought the common enemy. I remember in the year 1899 I was travelling in Finland. It was a bitterly cold September day, and I was glad when we reached Terioki (a station an hour's distance from Petrograd) to get some refreshment. Sitting in a corner of the room I was enjoying my cup of tea, when suddenly I heard a rough and imperious voice.

"A glass of gin (vodka). Be quick!"

"But we have no gin," replied the waiter. "We sell no alcohol here."

"What is the meaning of this? Well, then, give me some wine."

Again the waiter answered quietly, "We sell no wine at this station."

"Dear me! How absurd!" exclaimed the rough voice. "Well, then, give me some beer at once."

"Very well, sir, I can offer you beer, but only if you also take some solid food. Here are beef-steak, chops, patties—choose what you like."

"All right, all right; give me beer and anything you like besides," shouted the thirsty traveller. Grumbling and vexed, he swallowed his steak and drank his beer, looking with disappointed eyes at the half-bottle that had been placed before him.

I followed the scene from my corner, and was greatly amused. During that time a gentleman who was studying my face seemed to read the meaning of my satisfied and joyful look.

"Madam," he said politely, taking off his hat, "pardon the liberty I take in addressing you, but I see you are pleased with this little scene."

"Pleased," I repeated; "no, I am not pleased, I am delighted."

"Well," continued he, "let me tell you that our struggle against drunkenness has not been in vain. And I am happy to meet people who seem to sympathise with the results of our work."

"Tell me more about it," I said. "I must know how you manage to paralyse drunkenness, even at railway stations, where there are so many sorts of people."

"Ah, it has gone further than those," proudly replied the unknown. "It seems that only a strong step in the right direction was needed to set the whole enterprise at work. The simple but important programme we have adopted is to induce our people to feel that a drunken country—like a drunkard—may easily degenerate and go to ruin. We are determined not to fall in that abyss."

"But what are the practical measures you recommend and which you apply?"

"Since this important duty became clear to us," he said, "we started to work with great energy. We established in every town and every village temperance meetings, conferences, discussions. We distributed useful leaflets, simply but clearly expounding our views on the necessity of our struggle,

and I am happy to say we have been all this time extremely successful. Our schemes have been eagerly accepted, and our society has immensely increased. In fact, our success has far exceeded our warmest expectations, both in diminishing the hours for the sale of alcohol and in reducing the number of public-houses. In many places—in Viborg, for instance—even beer is not sold. Those who want to buy alcohol must go elsewhere—that is to say, where our propaganda has not yet been so well established. No doubt it is only a question of time; far wider results are certain.

"Our propaganda," he continued, "at first seemed strange. Now all our societies compete with each other in zeal and energy. During our last elections, all our candidates secured the support of the tee-totallers, and when in Parliament, strengthened by the agitation, they carried most drastic measures."

"And yourself," I asked, "what political party do you belong to?"

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed he, as if I had put the most grotesque question. "I am a business man. All my time is absorbed by my business, and I have never had time for politics. Those who sympathise with our propaganda are my friends, that's all."

"What keeps your societies together? What pledges? For how long is the pledge binding? With us, in Russia proper," continued I, "each new member takes an oath in church, and likes to feel that there is a religious element connected with his pledge."

"We require nothing of the kind," answered he;

" the moment a man recognises the harm of alcohol he clearly sees where his duty lies, that's all. The conditions concerning the furtherance of our propaganda differ. In some places there are no alcohol shops at all. In others there are only a limited number of public-houses. As a rule, where they reduce that number they also limit the hours of sale."

" But I understand, according to the charming scene we have just witnessed," said I, " restrictions are also put on beer, whilst Count Witte actually recommended to teetotallers beer as a deviation from alcohol."

" Can it be possible ? " exclaimed the gentleman. " What was his object in doing so ? Every man knows perfectly well that it is only a question of degree. The substance remains the same. When you start with beer, you gradually go to the gin. This is known everywhere and, I repeat, by everybody. Among certain precautions, which are very useful, though they may seem at first glance trivial, is this. Where the sale of alcohol is not absolutely abolished, only diminished, gin is never sold in small bottles, which could be carried in the pocket. Alcohol is sold only in large bottles, which are too costly for the poor man and too cumbrous. The latter have to go to some other place or town—which is neither a cheap nor easy way of getting what one wants. As to private sale, it is out of the question, as it would be denounced immediately by some teetotal neighbour, and punished by law."

" What is the part of the Government in all these reforms ? " I asked.

"None," replied he, "none whatever, except that they ought to look for their revenue elsewhere, and not be afraid of displeasing the publicans."

Here I remembered that I had to continue my journey to Petrograd, and, thanking my obliging informant, hurriedly rushed to my train.

The terrible evil wrought in Russia by drunkenness has been generally admitted and discussed ever since I can remember. As is very well known, half of our convicts committed their crimes under the influence of this horrible scourge, a fact which is probably equally applicable to other countries, including England.

Some of our officials, my son amongst them, I am happy to say, availed themselves of every opportunity to explain the danger of the drink evil to the peasantry.

When the great reform of the Zemski Natchalnik (a local administrator resembling the English J.P.) was introduced, Alexander Novikoff delivered an address to the peasants on our estate in the following words:

"I came among you to make your acquaintance and to explain to you what was meant by the new reform inaugurated by His Majesty, and the changes which that reform introduces into your life. Let me read you the Imperial manifesto addressed to the Senate."

(Here followed the reading aloud of the ukase, amidst profound and attentive silence.)

"You thus see for yourselves that the object of this reform is the Emperor's desire to abolish certain previous conditions of your life, in order to promote

your well-being. The harvest of last year was of medium average. This year is worse ; our fields are almost naked ; and people are already threatened with famine. Is it possible that during several years of good harvest you could not have provided for one bad year ? This and other such negligences on your part have shown His Majesty 'the necessity of coming to your aid in establishing '—as it is said in the ukase—' a help which stands more within your reach.' That help, which is possessed of considerable power, stands nearer to you in two ways : nearer, locally speaking, and also nearer by the confidence which a Zemski Natchalnik hopes to arouse in you. Formerly, every complaint against the rural administration had to be forwarded to the tribunal in the district town ; that tribunal could thus form its judgment of a case only on the foundation of written documents, and consequently just rights were sometimes inadequately protected. Other cases necessitated appeals to still more distant authority. Henceforth, in all your business affairs, which your village judges are not allowed to settle, you have simply to appeal to your Zemski Natchalnik who lives close to you. But besides the local proximity there is the proximity of confidence, which I hope to deserve from you. Remember that I am always ready to hear you whenever you are in need, at any time of the day, either at my own house or in your village. I beg you to come to me, not only with your complaints, but also when you require advice or guidance. I shall always be happy to help you to the best of my power.

" Let me now tell you what I expect from your-

selves. I begin with your meetings. You must admit that great disorders have taken place at these gatherings. Were they not often accompanied with drinking? What a quantity of land and property has been exchanged for brandy! I have now given strict orders—which I repeat to you now—that the smallest piece of land is not to be disposed of without the consent of your village judges and unless sanctioned by me. You must keep well in mind that a village meeting is not a convivial gathering of friends, but is an administrative assembly, where you have to perform a serious duty conferred upon you. Had you always looked upon that duty in its proper light there would be no question of drunkenness at your meetings, nor could your village judges ever complain of not having the number of householders necessary for a legal meeting.

"I must now point out what is expected from you in your private life. First comes your duty to God. It is not for me to investigate what happens with your soul. That is the duty of your spiritual fathers—your confessors. But remember that I shall severely punish any disorderly behaviour in church or during any service. How often have I seen drunkenness at your marriage festivities—people going to church under the influence of drink. The same happens at Easter and other holidays. I appeal to your spiritual fathers to help me in re-educating you; and I shall also be very happy, so far as the law allows me to do so, to help them, whenever my authority may be needed for their support.

"I now mention your duties to your Sovereign.

You beg him to help you in your harvest difficulty. What can you do in return? How can you repay him? Only in helping us, in the execution of his orders, in faithfully obeying the laws and their administrators. Until now you have considered your village chiefs almost as your servants; while their sacred duty is not to flatter your weaknesses, but to lead you in the path of right.

"Now let us refer to your family obligations. It has lately become the custom for the youngsters to attend the village meetings, with loud and idle talk; while the heads of the family, who are best entitled to express their opinions, as they used to do in olden times, shrink from attending. Addressing ourselves to a village meeting, we say 'elders,' but there are only youngsters to be seen. You must admit that, though the old people are less educated than you in reading and writing, they have nevertheless much more experience and are more attentive to their duties.

"As far as your private life is concerned, I must draw your particular attention to two of your shortcomings, which have not been hitherto sufficiently pointed out to you.

"The first is your want of respect to your parents, which I will not tolerate, because how can any man expect respect from others when he is himself disrespectful to his own parents?

"The second fault is drunkenness. How many families are driven to misery; how many crimes are committed only through alcohol? Neither I nor your village judges have the right to break into your homes and prevent you by law from spending your

time in drinking. We can only urge and beg you to give up that habit. But remember well: to come to a village meeting or to a tribunal in a state of intoxication is prohibited by law, and for this you may be severely punished. A new election of village judges has now to take place, and this new administration is subject to the control of your Zemski Natchalnik. I have often heard people say: 'He is a happy fellow now. He may drink as much as he likes, now that he is a judge.' For myself, I confidently expect that with the new administration there will be neither drunkenness nor bribery. Your new judges have to give an oath on the gospel. It is your duty to elect men who realise the importance of such an oath. The title of a village judge should command a respect of which every man ought to be proud. I hope that we shall live together in harmony, and that you will help me in my difficult task. Now let us thank God for granting us an Emperor so anxious to help us and to promote our well-being. Let us also pray the Almighty to enlighten us, and to guide us in our choice in the important duties we are now about to undertake."

A Te Deum followed Mr. Novikoff's speech, then the election of the village judges, and the assemblage of peasants, thus rendered serious and thoughtful, presented an impressive scene.

It was satisfactory to see with what intense interest the peasants followed these words of sober advice.

Some years ago, I cannot exactly say when and where, I ventured to describe some of my own personal experiences connected with the same vital

question. I remember so well the details of the facts of which I then spoke, that I would like to repeat them even now.

I was driving one evening from the Zarskoe Selo Station in Petrograd to my hotel, some distance away. Although it was the summer season the weather reminded one rather of October or November. It was cold, rainy and windy; under such circumstances one naturally begins dreaming of personal comfort, a warm room and a cup of hot tea. One becomes prosaic. It seemed to me as if my drive would never come to an end.

Suddenly I heard a voice: "Madame," asked my young driver, "are you a Russian?"

"Yes," answered I, "thank God, I am a Russian!"

A few minutes later I heard the same voice say: "Madame, are you a Greek Orthodox?"

I naturally repeated again: "Yes, thank God, I am a Greek Orthodox!"

But my driver seemed to be inquisitive.

"And do you often see the Tsar?" asked the boy.

"No, unfortunately very seldom," answered I.

But I was puzzled to know the cause of all these questions, I even forgot for a few minutes to dream about my cup of hot tea, and took up the dialogue myself.

"But tell me, why do you want to know all these things?"

"Well, I thought that perhaps I could beg you to intercede on our behalf, when you see His Majesty. The fact is, I have been brought up at Mr. Serge

Ratchinsky's school as a teetotaller. May God bless him for the good he has done to us children."

The lad went on to explain that on growing up he had to help his parents, who owing to a bad harvest suffered great privations. He left his village and came to Petrograd to work and earn some money. Of course he had to buy a nice horse, a good cab and an overcoat—the authorities are very particular now as to the drivers' appearance in towns. He had to face all these expenses, and to work very hard, as may be imagined. In fact he was at it all day.

"When the evening comes," he continued, "one can really die of starvation: nowhere is a crust of bread obtainable. All the bakeries, all the tea-rooms, sausage-shops and canteens of every sort are closed punctually at 8 p.m. Only the public bars are open all night, but even there no food can be procured. You must admit that no man can live entirely without food," wisely concluded my driver.

Having expressed my acquiescence I became silent, and soon afterwards reached my hotel.

But ever since that day my young cabman's unpretentious conversation has been retained in my memory. Besides, a strange circumstance resulted from it. Mr. Serge Ratchinsky was one of my best friends. I had now met one of his pupils, who are all devoted to him and to his teaching, and are moreover all teetotallers.

It is pleasant to see sometimes good work actually bearing good fruit, and to realise that all our efforts are not in vain. Of course we must never hesitate

THE CLERGY AND CHOIR OF NOVO-ALEXANDROFKA,

N THE DAY OF THE CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH

to do our duty because sometimes it results only in disappointment. I also had worked to the best of my ability in the same direction as Ratchinsky, but more and more did I realise my impotence in fighting an evil of such magnitude. It became evident to me that certain measures, in order to be accepted by the whole of Russia, could only be carried out when proclaimed by the highest Power in the land. If only the Tsar would come to our rescue! was my constant thought. Had not the emancipation of forty-eight millions of Serfs been a good enough example to justify this hope? But still in my humble way I continued to do whatever I could, at all events for conscience' sake.

So when I used to go to our village Novo Alexandrovka, I sometimes invited peasants to take tea with me. I confess they always accepted my invitations with pleasure, though they knew that I was an inveterate teetotaller, and that I hated their favourite vodka. So they took one mug after another of my tea, and bit their sugar with evident satisfaction. I took advantage of these informal meetings to explain to them the horror of taking intoxicating liquors. Once I asked one of my guests:

"How many roubles a year do you spend on drink? Tell me frankly." They all seemed very embarrassed at my question, but one of them dolefully replied:

"Well, I believe, not less than fifty roubles a year."

"Is it not a sin," exclaimed I, "a great sin? We in the Government of Tambov, as you all know, can buy a good cow for that money, and with that

there would be ready food for all the chicks and brats, and no need for them to go about begging for food."

"That may be so," agreed my visitor; and then he became silent and continued to drink his mug of tea.

Watching my poor folk, I would sometimes ask them if they cared for tea, and always received the same reply:

"Why of course we all like tea, but it is too dear for us. Naturally our masters may indulge in it, but we are poor people with empty pockets, while vodka is quite within our reach, and is cheap and plentiful everywhere."

"Yes," I said to myself, "Count Witte has not shrunk from tempting the poor people everywhere in every way. He introduced the diabolical habit amongst them of buying their alcohol in small bottles at a conveniently low price. Thus any beggar can buy one of these bottles and put it in his pocket." This drink question made me feel sometimes exceedingly wretched. Surely, I said to myself, something might be done? The evil done by Witte's demoralising measure is well understood by the Germans. As soon as they occupied the Polish provinces in Russia, one of their first steps was not only to re-open all the alcohol shops, but to add greatly to their number. Let us hope that this evil, like the occupation itself, is only temporary.

If some benevolent person would make alcohol very expensive and tea very cheap and therefore accessible, another of my dreams would be realised. But fairies are scarce. Yet perhaps there exists a means by which this end may be attainable.

If the duty on imported tea were greatly diminished, as well as the excise on sugar, a great step towards sobriety would thereby be assured. People who are indifferent to the moral condition of Russia assure me that this would cause too heavy a loss of Government revenue. They may be right, but I should suppose that any temporary loss of revenue would soon be made up by the increased demand for tea and sugar, which would undoubtedly be immense, both articles being so important to our people's comfort. Still less doubt could there be about the moral advantage. Temperance has, it is agreed, an enormously beneficial effect.

Those who want to see this for themselves and to study this question thoroughly, should go especially to Plotsk in our Polish provinces, and visit there our Old Catholics called "Mariavites" and their bishops. It cannot be sufficiently well known that since this noble religious movement began in the year 1871 (when the Pope's infallibility was proclaimed), 200,000 people have become Mariavites, thanks to the efforts and example of their bishops and priests, and that all the congregation is composed of absolute teetotallers. A leading and curious characteristic of Bishop Kovalsky's parish is that they are all absolute teetotallers—materially very poor, but rich in faith and energy. Each of them joyfully brings to the Church his hard-earned contribution, with the result that the community is well provided with churches, schools, workshops, etc.

Try to understand by this example what voluntary efforts, personal sacrifices and teetotalism may do. Since these lines were written, God has taken

pity upon us, and on the declaration of War, our noble and courageous Emperor came to our rescue by ordering the closing of the vodka bars and the total prohibition of alcohol. From all the reports, this measure, drastic though it was, has elicited not the complaints, but rather the blessings of the entire country. A curious fact is also traceable to this wise legislation in many parts of Russia : the village banks have never been in better funds than now, while crime has enormously diminished, and family life flourishes.

Reforms in Russia, even of the greatest magnitude, are sometimes carried out with miraculous rapidity.

As a great many people, even in England, well know, the liberation of forty-eight millions of Serfs —half of whom suddenly became freeholders—was actually introduced (19 February, 1862) after two years working out.

The abolition of the village Commune (in many respects resembling the Indian Communal System) has been abolished in still shorter time. It worked fairly well, I am told, before the emancipation, but ceased to do so after the great Reform.

The complete abolition of the Traffic in drink was effected in two days, all over Russia, by the Emperor's order, and at this very moment, in spite of the war and our bewildering expenditure in self-defence, for which Russia never thought of preparing herself, our Minister of Public Instruction, Count Ignatieff, is elaborating another gigantic reform—the execution of which will prove that he is a true son of his celebrated father. The latter, Count Nicolas Ignatieff, our former Ambassador in

Turkey, and later Minister of Interior, was well known in the world for his grand schemes and ideas.

At this moment, whilst I am writing this (August, 1916) the intention is to introduce in the whole of our large country, *general* compulsory education, and ten additional universities. And we Russians firmly believe in the realisation of measures of such gigantic proportions, when they are urgently needed by our people.

With us, what may seem almost incredible becomes perfectly real when guided by one concentrated and intelligent power.

CHAPTER XIII

MISCELLANEOUS MEMORIES

My Embarrassment—A Spy—I Am Easily Taken In—A Demand for Fifty Pounds—A Threat—I Defy the Blackmailer—A Warning—Gladstone's Refusal to Meet Gambetta—My Husband's Dilemma—Russian Views on Duelling—Kinglake Challenges an Emperor—My Brother's Views—Kinglake's Charm—The Value of an Englishman—The Dogger Bank Incident

I ONCE heard an after-dinner speaker refer to his remarks as "long pauses bridged by a poverty of thought." I find that a volume of reminiscences is in danger of becoming a sheaf of inconsequences bound by unpardonable egotism. I seem long since to have exhausted what I regard as a reasonable number of I's; and then again, there are so many things that I want to say that bear no reasonable relation to each other.

My position is that of the young man at a dinner party who was boiling over with eagerness to tell a shooting story. He waited impatiently for the conversation to develop in such a direction as would enable him to drag it in. Dessert arrived, and still no opening. In sheer desperation he stamped loudly on the floor beneath the table. "What was that? Sounded like a gun. Talking of guns, etc.," and he secured his opening.

If I appear inconsequent, my readers must remember that young man's shooting story and forgive me.

For some reason that I have never quite been able to understand, people seem to think that I am endowed with great wealth. If they only knew how money hates me. The moment I take it into my hands it runs and runs away from me with frightened speed. But all this does not prevent people from convincing themselves not only that I am possessed of great riches, but that I am so stupid as not to know what to do with them.

Sometimes this state of affairs is extremely tiresome. I recall one incident that should be a lesson to others as it has been a lesson to me. One day a card was brought to me bearing the name

GRETCHEN ——
Aus Riga.

I asked myself: is that Gretchen going to complain to me of her Faust? Have I to chastise that captivating *mangeur de Cœurs?* But the fact that my visitor was from Riga, and thus a compatriot of mine to a great extent, prevailed upon my doubts, and I received my young lady, who by the way was not particularly young and not exactly a fashionable lady, was not only terribly lean, but angular and wretched in appearance. This killed my hesitation, and I eagerly tried to find out what she wanted and what I could do, and who recommended her to me. "Nobody," she said. "I never heard your name, but by mere chance saw it in the *Court Guide.*" She wanted some remunerative work, as remunerative as possible. I already had a secretary, but engaged my "Gretchen" as an extra reader. She seemed pleased, and I was in hopes

that I should also be pleased with that new alliance. My new reader was certainly not stupid, and always wanted to have some messages for my friends, wanting to know everything about everybody. Always being busy and short of time I could not satisfy that curious fancy of my "Gretchen." She said she knew nobody in England, except myself. I tried to help her, advising her to start a little boarding-house, especially as I was going to Scotland for a fortnight to stay with Lady Mary Nisbet-Hamilton. Besides, a new plan suggested itself to me; I thought that whilst "Gretchen" was looking for her rooms and furniture, she might live in my rooms at the hotel during my absence. May I now say that no plan could be more foolish and dangerous than mine turned out to be.

Scotland is a wonderfully hospitable and kind part of the world, and oh! how beautiful, and I was naturally captivated and prolonged my visit. On returning to my hotel I found "Gretchen" much less angular and less melancholy. The little cottage was found, the furniture bought, and she still wanted only a little more help. Upon this we parted, to my great satisfaction. But something perfectly unexpected happened to me a few weeks later. "My Gretchen" returned to me and said that she decidedly wanted more help, not less than £50 (fifty). At that time, my pocket being empty, I looked at her sternly and said: "But you are mad, this is out of the question." "No," said she, "you shall give me this money. In fact I can compel you to do so. Do you know that I can sell your correspondence to an editor or a publisher?

You forgot to lock your drawers and I have taken a copy of all letters addressed to you." I confess I was appalled.

This happened in the years 1878–1880, I don't remember which, when I was in the midst of a tremendous political agitation. With my answer I generally returned letters which might be taken as political documents, still my drafts could serve as a clue to many important discussions, and then I remembered that I did not return Bishop Strossmeyer's letter to Mr. Gladstone, as I wanted to discuss it verbally at our first meeting.

Yes, I was terribly served for my imprudence. However, trying to look perfectly calm, I said: "Very well, sell my correspondence, sell your copies to whom you like, but I cannot give you the money you require, and I forbid you ever to come to me again. Sell me to whomsoever you like, be it a statesman or a publisher."

A few years later a friend of mine was interested to find out what had become of her and her boarding-house, but there she heard that my Gretchen had left England and many debts behind her. We then understood that I simply had been in the hands of a spy. But have I not been cruelly punished for being young and stupid? Alas! stupidity is very often a great luxury for which one pays dearly. I was still in deep mourning, and somehow personal questions affected me very little.

I hope that this strange experience will be understood by some of my indulgent readers, and may at the same time serve as a warning especially to thoughtless, confiding Russians.

I remember dear Kinglake once annoying me by referring to John Bright as "only" a Quaker. I had for Bright a great admiration, and before I had finished I think poor dear "Eothen" became convinced of the fact.

My first meeting with Bright was in the late eighties. I was as carried away as were my two brothers, Nicolas and Alexander Kiréeff, by the movement of the Old Catholics and the idea of Universal Peace (even before The Hague Conference). Great was my joy when one day the visit was announced to me of the famous John Bright, whose name was not only known, but also revered in Russia. We naturally began talking on the mission of "The Friends" to Russia, their reception by the Emperor Nicolas, and the Crimean War.

"After all," said I frankly, "in spite of all her sacrifices in the year '54, England has gained but little; just a monument in Pall Mall inscribed 'Crimea' to remind the world of a costly struggle."

Our interview lasted about two hours. He talked away and I remained a patient listener. I confess I fancied that as I said nothing, the conversation would be quite to his liking! And I suppose it was, for meeting a friend of mine shortly afterwards, he remarked: "I saw O. K. the other day. I was very much struck by her. She is the very picture of health and strength. She will never grow old."

Nothing more! Was it not dreadful? Are you smiling?

Our position in Finland offers sometimes amusing experiences. I remember my poor husband's trouble at Helsingfors. At that time he was attached

to the Grand Duke Nicolas (father of the present Grand Duke), who was always very kind to him. In meeting his chief at Helsingfors he was invited to come to lunch on the same day. At the appointed time, having put on all his decorations and the appropriate uniform, he went out into the street and tried to get a cab. He saw many vacant vehicles one after the other, and made desperate signs to make them stop, all in vain. Not even the policeman seemed to understand what the poor General tried to explain. Will you believe it !— Novikoff entirely missed his appointment because they all pretended that they could not understand a word of Russian. I confess my husband's distress amused me, but his helplessness seemed so incredible that I only saw its funny side at the time— whilst in reality it certainly possessed also a very serious side.

It was always pleasing and interesting to me to feel and to know that my old friend Kinglake and my dear brother Alexander, though they did not then know each other personally, were linked together by a common opinion on a subject they both took very deeply to heart : the subject of duels. Kinglake could never pardon the Duke of Wellington the abolition of duelling in the British Army.

Personally, having always felt very strongly against every kind of violence or bloodshed, I found his point of view very difficult to understand, and often tried to investigate more profoundly the ethics of the question.

" Do you really mean," I said to Kinglake one day, " that it is right and justifiable for people to

attack each other, sometimes for the flimsiest reasons, as is so often done in Germany, just for the fun of the thing—while the tragic little game, as often as not, ends in the death of one of the combatants ? "

" That is so," said Kinglake seriously ; " but the possibility of a duel ennobles the spirit of a country, is an education in manners, and results in the development of a kind of moral *muscle*."

The anecdote, by the way, is well known that Kinglake once sent a challenge, went off to Boulogne where the duel was to take place, waited there for days in vain, and, his adversary having failed to appear or to make any sort of response, returned to London in disgust. The point of this story, however, has never been revealed, and after so many years I think I can hardly be accused of indiscretion if I tell my readers the interesting detail that the adversary to whom Kinglake had sent his unanswered challenge was no less a personage than Louis Napoleon, afterwards the Emperor Napoleon III ! I have this from Abraham Hayward, a very indiscreet friend of Kinglake's, who never appreciated the importance of the Oriental saying : " Speech is silver and silence is gold." For my part, I have often regretted having said too much, and never deplored having said too little.

But to return to the serious aspect of the question. My brother, though he always strongly condemned the frivolity and light-mindedness with which the practice of duelling is treated in Germany, held the view that duels were an indispensable necessity where questions of honour are concerned.

"Can you imagine," he said to me one day in reply to a remonstrance in this connection, "that I could, for instance, allow some madman to attack with impunity your good name or that of our mother? How could I hesitate for a moment to send him a challenge?"

"But you yourself say '*a madman*,'" I protested. "A madman is not responsible for his actions."

"The line between madness and sanity," answered my brother, "is a very difficult one to determine. The punishment of certain misdeeds is necessary, not only for the culprit himself, but as a deterrent and precautionary measure, without which no civilised society can long exist in safety."

My brother, indeed, was exceedingly keen on this subject, and really became quite an authority on the question of duelling. Not long before his death, when he was already very ill, General Mikoulin, who was publishing a book in this connection, came and asked my brother to give him some of his views, which he did at some length.

"Why can we not publish your thoughts ourselves?" I protested, when Mikoulin had left the room; "why should you give them to someone else?"

My brother smiled sadly.

"Is it not all the same?" he asked. "As long as these views are propagated, what matter under whose name? Mikoulin is a staff-general, and I am sure he will do it well."

Mikoulin, by the way, who published the book entirely according to what my brother had told him, was killed the other day, after many brilliant deeds. It seems to me that some of the opinions my

brother at various times expressed on this favourite theme, may be of interest to English readers. I will quote from some of his letters and articles.

"The question of duels in military circles," he once wrote, "has been thoroughly investigated and placed in its true position by the firm, guiding hand of our late beloved Emperor Alexander III, always so sensitive in matters of personal honour, and so keen for the preservation of peace.

"The matter is by no means an easy one to deal with, the more so as few people have the courage to discuss it with frankness and sincerity, preferring rather to 'run with the hare and hunt with the hounds,' in an indefinite desire to appear both ultra-humane and ultra-chivalrous!

"Duels have always existed, still exist, and will continue always to exist, whatever may be said against them and whatever measures may be taken to do away with them. I will even go so far as to say that they must exist, as long as the moral status of society does not rise above its present level, as long as our culture does not grow broader."

"Is it not strange that no one will deny my right, revolver in hand, to defend my watch or my money against the assaults of a burglar? Why then am I to be denied the right to defend my honour in the same fashion? Besides, in defending my honour, I am defending society—for indeed it would be unthinkable to live in a world where honour could find no defender!

"Does it not seem strange and illogical to admit the defence of one's minor worldly goods and to forbid that of the most precious of all treasures?

ALEXANDER KIREEFF

We who believe in duels attack nobody—we only defend ourselves against attack. Let no one attack us, and we shall be as silent as deep waters, as unobtrusive as grass. The priceless treasure of our honour may be, in the opinion of others, an illusion, an abstract nothing that has no set value on markets and exchanges—but to us, it is precious. Leave us in peace. We do not ask you to abandon your utilitarianism, your financial materialism, we do not in fact interfere with *your* ideals, cannot you let us abide, unmolested, by *ours?*

"It is obvious, of course, that while defending duelling as a system, I do not for a moment deny the many undesirable factors that cannot be prevented from occasionally creeping into it. The ideal duel would be one in which the combatants would take upon themselves the defence not of personal, but of public and social interests and rights. Such a high level is, of course, hard to attain, but the element of personal revenge can nevertheless be considerably diminished.

"We hear on all sides that duelling is no better than murder, that duellists are brainless and thoughtless, that none but a fool could, in our enlightened age, mistake such a mad, meaningless savagery for chivalry. Poor duels, and poor irresponsible duellists! Were Pouschkin and Lermontoff, those victims of offended honour, really such fools? And Bentham, and the great socialist Lassalle himself? No—on certain conditions, duels are inevitable, and not one of my opponents in this matter will ever produce or invent anything better to take their place."

After quoting these passages from various of my

brother's private letters and articles, I insist upon adding that I have never seen a man more courteous, polite and universally esteemed than he. Two of our old generals—General Fock and General Smirnoff—who distinguished themselves by their courage in the Japanese war, quarrelled and found no one better able to arbitrate between them than Alexander Kiréeff. Their confidence in him was unlimited, but he understood that the question was of vital importance, and that a duel was unavoidable. Both combatants asked him to be present at the duel, and to see that the Russian duelling laws were strictly adhered to, which he did. General Smirnoff was wounded, but both recognised that my brother did all he could to bring about a reconciliation. If he failed, it only showed that certain tragic elements in life will take place in spite of all our efforts to prevent them.

I may add that my brother, equipped as he was with his chivalrous code of honour, was also an expert fencer, so distinguished indeed that, at a public fencing competition at Naples open to the whole of Europe, he carried off the first prize—a gold sword of honour. But I am glad to say that never once did he engage in a duel.

Apart from being in favour of duelling, Kinglake was, although in himself essentially a man of peace, all for war; it thinned out populations, just as duelling kept up a better tone in society. I, on the other hand, the daughter of a man who earned the St. George's Cross on the battlefield, the sister of two soldiers, and the wife of another, was always dreaming of peace.

My own idea is that no generation that has suffered a great war ever wants another. That is left for following generations who cannot conceive the horrors of what they themselves have not experienced.

Whenever I was absent from England I always received from Kinglake a weekly letter. I remember his once complaining that writing to a lady through the poste restante was like trying to kiss a nun through a double grating. Sometimes he would imitate the "little language" of the great satirist Swift, calling himself "poor dear me," and referring to me as "my dear miss." Thereby hangs a story.

On one occasion at dinner Hayward told a characteristic anecdote which, although it seemed to amuse the other ladies present, caused me considerable embarrassment. Kinglake afterwards said to me: "I thought you were a hardened married woman; I shall henceforth call you 'miss.'"

He was a very sweet, lovable man, old in years but a youth in heart. His letters were full of gaiety and persiflage.

Once he wrote to me:

"Hayward can pardon you having an ambassador or two at your *feet*, but to find the way to your *heart*, obstructed by a crowd of astronomers, Russ-expansionists, metaphysicians, theologians, translators, historians, poets—this is more than I can endure."

He was never tired of rallying me about my callers and friends, insisting that I was a *grande dame* to whom all the really great in the land came to

make obeisance. Once when staying at Sidmouth he wrote :

" Mrs. Grundy has a small house there, but she does not know me by sight. If Madame Novikoff were to come, the astonished little town, dazzled first by her, would find itself invaded by theologians, bishops, ambassadors of deceased emperors, and an ex-Prime Minister."

When he gave me his photograph, and I gave him mine, he referred to the transaction as " an exchange between the personified months of May and November."

On one occasion *The Times* inserted, to Kinglake's great indignation, a statement that I had been obliged to leave England. Shortly afterwards Chinery, the editor, happened to seat himself at the same table with Kinglake at the Athenæum Club. Kinglake immediately rose and moved to another part of the room.

" So unlike me," was his comment ; " but somehow a savagery as of youth came over me in my ancient days ; it was like being twenty years old again."

Later, however, he discovered that Froude had been indirectly responsible for the paragraph, and Kinglake immediately found means of conveying to Chinery his regrets.

Poor dear " Eothen's " mind was powerful and bright to his last day. I called on him frequently during his last days, and it was not until the end, which came on January 2nd, 1891, that I realised the extent of my loss.

For one thing there is, in the Englishman's eyes,

nothing more sacred on earth than the person and property of an Englishman. It would be well if some of our Russian officials would follow the example of their English friends. It is a praiseworthy and unquestioned fact that all Englishmen at home and abroad are penetrated by a personal sense of their duty towards each other. Everything English must be defended and encouraged, every Englishman must be helped and protected. Such patriotic *esprit de corps* and solidarity makes one sometimes feel quite envious, and indeed I have often noticed the very natural smile of incredulous surprise with which English people regard the so-frequently-met-with indifference shown by certain Russian officials towards Russian affairs.

An amusing example comes to my mind in connection with Lord Napier of Ettrick, a former British Ambassador at Petrograd, and a great friend of mine. Lord Napier called on me one day, and greeted me with a humorous glance. "I have just been to see your Governor-General," he said, smiling. "What funny people there are in the world! I went on business about some Englishman who came to me a few days ago with a complaint against a Russian. I was too busy to occupy myself with the matter, so thought I would hand it over to the local authorities. The Governor-General, however, didn't give me time to say much—before I had explained anything, he interrupted me with the warmest assurances that I need have no fears whatever,—that the Russians would be punished, and the Englishman given full satisfaction for whatever offence he may have suffered.

"I considered it my duty," continued Lord Napier, "to make it quite clear to the Governor-General that I knew nothing about the rights of the matter and that it was necessary to look into the facts. After all, the Englishman might be in the wrong, or the whole thing might be an invention! But really, I had the greatest difficulty in persuading our friend to consider such a possibility! Is not my impartiality praiseworthy? Are you not pleased?" and Lord Napier smiled questioningly. We both laughed, and I thought it best to treat the incident as a good joke—but actually, I confess that its humour by no means appealed to me!

Let me draw a parallel: A few years ago a woman of doubtful nationality was arrested by the Russian authorities in Warsaw. She immediately wailed out that she was of British extraction, and made a theatrical appeal "to the English nation," through the medium of some English newspaper correspondent.

Without making the smallest attempt at investigating the circumstances, the whole of Great Britain was up in arms and astir with anger and indignation. Excited meetings and demonstrations followed through the length and breadth of the land, while the newspapers filled their columns with foolish unfounded libels on Russia. The whole agitation only ended with the official report of the British Consul in Warsaw, announcing the Emperor's pardon, by which the originator of all this agitation was allowed to return to her country.

It is indeed a happy fact that no Englishman or Englishwoman need ever fear to travel in any

country where there exists a British Embassy or Consulate. Every British subject knows that wherever he may be, there is someone who can, in case of need, protect and defend him, and that once he has announced his nationality he has nothing more to fear.

All this only makes one repeat the wish that our Russian officials might somehow be induced to show more interest in their fellow-countrymen, and, in their international relations, to follow closely and fearlessly the admirable example of our great ally England.

It appeared to us Russians that England was always on the look out for something to magnify into an international incident. As I write, I am reminded of another incident where the sacredness of the person of British subjects was demonstrated. This was the Dogger Bank affair. Although the circumstances are well known, I will recapitulate them.

Russia was at war with Japan, and her Baltic Fleet was on the way to the Far East. On the night of October 21st–22nd, 1904, fifty British trawlers, manned by some five hundred men, were engaged in fishing on the Dogger Bank. The first division of the Baltic Fleet passed them, the second division turned their searchlights upon the fishing boats. The officers in charge imagined that they saw torpedo boats approaching. They immediately opened fire on the trawlers with quick-firing guns, and in the course of twenty minutes had fired some three hundred shots. Their gunnery was not very good, however, as fortunately only six of the boats were hit, one being sunk. Two fishermen were

killed, and four wounded. The Russian fleet then steamed away to the south.

Unfortunately the officers of this scratch fleet seemed to have been suffering from nerves, but that did not, I think, justify the outcry raised in this country.

I wrote to the Press, drawing attention to a similar mistake that had occurred in 1890, in which the position had been reversed. It was on the occasion of the joint international forces that were being sent from Tientsin to Peking at the time of the Boxer Revolt. About midnight on June 4 a body of Russian sailors were returning on foot from their work. Some English sailors, believing them to be Boxers, opened fire from the railway carriages. Before the mistake had been discovered two Russians had been killed and several others wounded. Vice-Admiral Seymour, who was in command of the British forces, hastened to send an official letter of regret, which was immediately accepted, and there the matter ended. There was no outcry in the Russian Press—we understood and accepted the Englishman's word.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PHANTOM OF NIHILISM

England's Sympathy with the Nihilists—Cabinet Ministers' Indiscretion—Mr. Gladstone's Incredulity—I Prove My Words—Mr. Gladstone's Action—A Strange Confusion—A Reformed Nihilist—His Significant Admission—The Nihilist's Regret—The Death of Revolutionary Russia—The Greatness of the Future—The Reckless, Impulsive Russian—The Russian Refugees at Buenos Ayres—They Crave for a Priest

ONCE upon a time the newspapers in Great Britain devoted quite a considerable space to Nihilism, almost invariably writing of it with considerable sympathy and very little insight. If the editors, in whose papers many "illuminating" articles appeared, were to imagine those self-same articles written to-day in Russian newspapers with the single alteration of the word "Nihilism" into "Sinn Feinism," they would understand something of the feelings their articles aroused in the hearts of Russians.

As an illustration of the fascination that the internal affairs of Russia seemed to possess for Englishmen, I may tell a little story which at the time caused me and other Russians no little annoyance. There was a paper that used to reach me more or less regularly entitled *Free Russia*. It was the organ of the English Society of Russian Freedom, and its amiable object was "to destroy the Russian

Government." In other words, it was Nihilistic. I believe the publication started in the autumn of 1893. As soon as I discovered its purpose I used to drop it into the waste-paper basket without a second thought. One day, however, I happened to glance at the title page, on which I found were printed the names of the General Committee of the Friends of Russian Freedom, and to my astonishment I found there the names of the Rt. Hon. Arthur Ackland, M.P., and the Rt. Hon. G. J. Shaw-Lefevre, M.P. (who became Lord Eversley), and Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P. The two first-named were members of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry.

By a curious chance, on the day of my discovery Lady Spencer was holding a reception, and there I saw Mr. Gladstone. I am afraid rather impetuously I burst into reproaches at the conduct of two of his ministers. He was incredulous, and asked me to send him proofs. I promised that I would, but alas! I found the waste-paper basket had been cleared, and the paper destroyed. This was the next morning. What was I to do? It was a miserable, foggy day. I hate London fogs, but I was determined to convince Mr. Gladstone. I therefore went into the City, and anyone who goes into the City on a foggy day must be either a lunatic or a patriot, I told myself. The only redeeming feature of that uncomfortable morning was that I proved conclusively that the circulation of *Free Russia* must be a very small one. I had two hours' hard work before at last I ran a copy to earth. Returning home I wrote to Mr. Gladstone in great triumph, and the result was that I received a letter from him which showed his uncompromising disapproval. He wrote:

CHURCH BUILT BY ALEXANDER NOVIKOFF ON HIS FATHER'S GRAVE AT NOVO-ALEXANDROFKA

"It appears to me that a minister in our country has no title to belong to a Political Society in another. Let him look to his own affairs—here, at any rate, these give us enough, and more than enough, to do."

Mr. Gladstone went on to say that his colleagues, Mr. Lefevre and Mr. Ackland, were of his opinion, and that he did not propose to worry about Mr. Burt unless I wished it, as he was not a minister.

I fancy there must have been a disapproving look in Mr. Gladstone's eye, and a stern note in his voice when he interviewed his ministers.

Oh dear, if English people had only refrained from directing that vast fund of sympathy which they undoubtedly possess towards Nihilists and men whose sole object is destruction and what the Germans call 'frightfulness'! I once said, and I believe it to be true, that as a rule the only thing known in England about Russians is that they take lemon with their tea.

There were some, even, who went to the length of asserting, always taking good care to add that their information came from unimpeachable sources, that "Panslavism and Nihilism went hand in hand." Imagine the astonishment of the British Imperialists if they were told on the best authority that "Imperialism and Sinn Feinism went hand in hand!"

What a calumny! What are the tenets of Panslavism? Religion, autocracy, and nationality. These three motives, according to us, are not only united but indissoluble. They form the very essence of our creed, of our life. In fact we are the opposite pole to the Nihilists, who hate every idea of God,

who detest autocracy and despise nationality! The hostility between these two lies in their nature. There can be no compromise between them. The Russian people abhor the Nihilists, who are perfectly aware of that feeling.

I am told that some years ago a judge offered a Nihilist the alternative of being left to Lynch Law, upon which the prisoner fell on his knees and implored to be punished by the existing Russian laws. All the Russians who deserve that name, who are devoted to their Church and their country, are particularly devoted to the present Emperor. They trust, they love him; they appreciate his noble and generous qualities, his extreme kindness, and his self-sacrifice. Anything done to injure him injures the whole of Russia. It needs, in truth, no effort on the part of the Panslavists to be devoted to Nicholas II. I have seen it stated that the peasants, disappointed with not receiving a new distribution of land at the last coronation, form a fertile ground for Nihilism. This is not the case. The Nihilists have long ago given up the hope of spreading their diabolical doctrines among the rural classes. If they got hold of a few peasants—thank God! very few indeed—those "Converts" of theirs have abandoned their plough and have been perverted in some public school only by a semblance of science. It is a fatal tendency, which is to be deplored and deprecated in all the public establishments in Russia as well as in foreign countries, that very young people, even children, are allowed to discuss and twaddle on politics, instead of studying their grammars and their geography! With that tendency

mistakes and false doctrines are unavoidable ; any mischievous teacher may easily take hold of them and turn them into flexible tools.

People are misinformed about the hardships of compulsory military service, which gives every year, even in time of peace, a contingent of about 830,000, which is much below the number required by the Army.

Russia has never shown herself anxious to fight. In fact she has had fewer wars than her neighbours. From the Crimean War in 1855 till the year 1877 she fought only one serious war with a European Power. In the course of this time France had two—in 1859 with Austria, in 1870 with Germany ; Prussia two—in 1866 with Austria, in 1870 with France ; Austria two—in 1859 with France, in 1866 with Germany. So there is no actual ground for pitying the Russian soldiers more than any other. Of course, every soldier risks being killed. That is not, however, the speciality of my countrymen alone. All the great European countries, even Great Britain herself has been forced to sacrifice her ideals victim to emergency.

People often talk of the difficulty of an autocratic Government in crushing revolutions. Is this really so ? Are the years of '48 and '49 meaningless or forgotten ? Surely not in France, not in Germany, not in Austria, or Italy ! The form of government has nothing to do with plots and assassinations. The prototype of a constitutional monarch was undoubtedly Louis Philippe, who during his eighteen years' reign had to face eighteen attempts directed against his life. The Emperor Louis Napoleon had

about ten; and the President of the United States, even his life is not unassailable. The assassination of Lincoln and McKinley are full of meaning.

There is an old English saying, "Set a thief to catch a thief." I would say, "Learn from an ex-Nihilist what Nihilism really means." In 1888 Mr. Leon Tikhomirov, an able author and accomplished scholar, who had been led into Nihilism, in a pamphlet entitled *Why I have Ceased to be a Revolutionist,* publicly recanted his former faith. This act on the part of one of its most prominent and active members spread something like dismay in the Nihilist camp. "A great misfortune has befallen us, brethren, a very great one," was the beginning of an open letter addressed by a contemporary Nihilist to his political co-religionists. "Yes, a great misfortune," he exclaims again, with Russian frankness at the conclusion of his epistle. From the Nihilistic point of view the event referred to was undoubtedly a very great loss, a most serious "misfortune."

I did not then know Mr. Tikhomirov personally, but he has since become a great friend of mine. After leaving the Kertch Gymnasium with the gold medal, he entered a Russian university, where he took a foolish part in one of the students' riots, and in the propaganda. Four years' prison life was the result of those follies.

The pamphlet which contains his confession is notable for its tone of extreme honesty and sincerity. In all Christian charity we are bound to sympathise with him who repents. "Do not strike a man on the ground" is a good proverb which should have a

practical application. In Mr. Tikhomirov the Nihilist party had a talented, cultivated and probably sincere member, who sacrificed his material interests and prospects in life in order to be true to his convictions.

At that time his idea, unfortunately, was that the only possible evolution for Russia was—Revolution. In that direction he worked and wrote for several years. The first edition of *La Russie Politique et Sociale* belongs to that lamentable period of his career. But the success which attended that mistaken book has not prevented its author from retracing his steps in an opposite and more worthy direction, with the result shown in his pamphlet *Why I have Ceased to be a Revolutionist.* The unreserved sincerity of this publication is remarkable. To speak out one's mind needs much moral courage, especially when one knows that all who sympathise are far away, and that one is surrounded by people who are only too ready to impute the meanest and most despicable motives. Mr. Leon Tikhomirov, however, faced that risk.

The sketch of his moral convalescence is worth study. Whilst pondering over his psychological diagnosis, one involuntarily recalls Shakespeare's—

> Yes, indeed, none are so surely caught, when they are caught,
> As wit turned fool!

But, fortunately, the wit is now restored. In order to render Mr. Tikhomirov full justice, it would be necessary to translate every line of his pamphlet; short of that, where I cannot give the words in full, I shall endeavour to carry the spirit.

"I look upon my past with disgust," says he, and this is not surprising when the details of that past are examined. He is not influenced by any expectation of the future. Having left the revolutionary party his only object now is to promote, by legitimate means, the cause of true progress; the conviction that he has been right in abandoning his former faith is only strengthened by the reproaches now heaped upon him by his former associates. . . . "When I was twenty," says he, "I used to write revolutionary programmes. If twenty years later I were unable to write something better, I should really have a very poor opinion of myself."

Still, that transition, from folly to wisdom, was not accomplished without struggle and hesitation. Mr. Tikhomirov frankly admits how hard it was for him to acknowledge that he was utterly wrong; that, in clinging to his theories, he held a dead body which could not be revived! He hesitated to bury it, in spite of its obvious lifelessness.

"About the year 1880," Mr. Tikhomirov continues, "I, and not I alone, began to feel that our party was becoming torpid, was daily losing more and more of its vital force, which had at first seemed so great. The following year I began wondering how it was that Russia was healthy and full of life, while the revolutionary movement, that very movement which, according to our ideas, was the very manifestation of national growth, was withering and decaying. This obvious contradiction reduced me to a morbid despair. I went abroad with the sole object of publishing my recollections of the events through which I had lived. Since then, all the

remains of the old organisations have perished, all, all have tumbled down! Reality has given me startling lessons. One consoling hope, however, remains. I deemed it possible to rebuild our party, while remaining within it. Oh, what a self-delusion that was! In reality it was I who enslaved myself, who was prevented from thinking, from meditating, as I ought to have done! Still the strokes fell too heavily; their weight became intolerable. I felt we were on a wrong track, and urged Lopatine and the other members of our party to search for some new paths. On finding that they would not, or could not, follow my advice, in 1884 I wrote to say that I had ceased to belong to their party, and withdrew their right to use my name. Thus ended my co-operation with all their circles and organisations."

There is in Mr. Tikhomirov's narrative a sincerity and truthfulness which appeal to our best nature. He is not melodramatic, he does not strain after theatrical effects, but he compels his reader to feel for him, almost to share his sorrow. But let us listen again to his own voice.

"Meditating upon recent events, I wrote in my diary of March, '86—'Yes, I am definitely convinced now that revolutionary Russia—taken as a serious intelligent party—does not exist. Revolutionists still exist, and may make some noise. But it is not a storm, only ripples on the surface of a sea. Since last year one fact seems to me perfectly obvious. All our hopes have to depend henceforth on Russia, on the Russian people. As to our revolutionists, hardly anything may be expected of them. I came to the conclusion that it was absolutely necessary to

arrange my life so as to serve Russia according to my own instinct, independently of any party. The Nihilist party, I now see too well, can only injure Russia. My common sense and my will might remain dormant, but once they awoke I had to obey them. If my former friends could leave their graves and come to life again, I would spare no effort to induce them to follow me, and then with them, or quite alone, I would take the path which I now feel to be the true one."

Mr. Tikhomirov has much sinned, but he has also loved much. Even in his revolutionary epoch, Russia was still precious to him, and he was always ready to die for her unity. In that respect, to his credit be it said, he was not a model Nihilist, whose creed it is to despise such "obsolete notions" as patriotism. How much freedom of thought was tolerated in those circles can be seen from the following incident. In an article intended by Mr. Tikhomirov for the Revolutionary Journal, *The Popular Will*, among many truisms he wrote: "Russia is in a normal state, while the revolutionary party is collapsing—a fact which can only be explained by some mistakes in the programme of our party." And again: "If terrorism is recommended to a country, the vitality of that country must be very doubtful." At these sentiments, Mr. Tikhomirov's comrades—the other editors of the paper—were thunderstruck, and peremptorily declined to admit them into their columns.

This schism was the dawn of Mr. Tikhomirov's salvation. His better self rapidly developed. He soon recognised that the less a country at large is

desirous of revolution, the more compelled are revolutionists to resort to terrorism. Thus the weaker the cause, the stronger the necessity for terrorism, which obviously was a criminal paradox. Further on, Mr. Tikhomirov says: "I have not given up my ideas of social justice, but they take a clearer, a more harmonious shape; riots, revolts, destruction, are all the morbid results of the social crisis which now traverses Europe. These things are not easily introduced into Russia. That disease has not yet reached her; nor can revolutionary movements, however temporarily pernicious, divert Russia from the path of her historical development.

"Political murders (says he) produced a certain commotion in the Russian Government so long as it believed that it had to deal with a strong threatening power. The moment it was realised how wretchedly small was that handful of men who resorted to murder merely because of their weakness and inability to undertake something on a larger scale—since that moment the Russian Government shows no signs of any kind of anxiety. It determined upon a strong system, which it unflinchingly carries out. Of course the life of the Emperor and of his different officials is spoilt by the perpetual expectation of danger, but in spite of this the Government will certainly never make any concessions to the Terrorist. A legal Government recognised by the whole country naturally objects to subordinate itself to whims. . . .

"The Russian Emperor has not usurped his power. That power was solemnly conferred upon his ancestors by an overwhelming majority of the Russian people, who have never since shown the

remotest desire to withdraw that power from the Romanoff dynasty. The law of the country recognises her Emperor as one above any kind of responsibility, and the Church of the country invests him with the title of her temporal head.

"Ten years of hard struggle have proved beyond possible doubt that all the revolutionists may well perish, one after the other; but Russia was dead against supporting them. The life of a Terrorist is a terrible one; it is that of a hunted wolf in momentary expectation of death. He suffers perpetual alarm from detectives, has to use false passports, to live in hiding, to resort to dynamite, to meditate murder. . . . Such a life necessitates the abandonment of all matters of most vital interest. All ties of affection under such circumstances are torture. Study is out of the question. Everybody, except the few ringleaders, has to be deceived. An enemy is suspected on all sides. No, the best among us, had they lived long enough to see the results obtained, would not have failed to give up such a struggle. We committed a terrible crime in demoralising Russian youth. One of our revolutionary chiefs—himself already doomed—to whom I expressed my present views as frankly as I am now doing, urged me to save our younger generation, and to exhort them to give up premature meddling with politics, and instead to prepare themselves for a useful life by hard study."

What good advice! "Think, observe, learn; do not trust words and shallow theories. That is what I now say to the inexperienced youth," says Mr. Tikhomirov. "I am utterly indignant," he con-

tinues, " when I hear remarks of the following kind : ' Let them make riots. Of course it is foolish, but what does it matter ? There is not much weight in all these fellows, and a riot is still a protest.' For my part, I now look upon these things quite differently."

After explaining at some length the stern duties of the rising generation, after earnestly entreating them to form their character and their principles, to study hard, to avoid the influence of political charlatans who simply exploit their ignorance, Mr. Tikhomirov goes on to say that " Russia has a great past, but a still greater future." He is, however, not blind to our shortcomings, of which a very serious one among our youths is their want of prudent resistance to mischievous influences. Their want of thought makes them accept every new political aphorism, however absurd.

" As soon as the universities are quiet for eight or nine months," he continues, " pressure is put upon the young students to make some absurd demonstration, some riots, something, and they listen to such instigations. Our censors are not infallible ; but censorship is an institution whose importance is exaggerated. The principal mistake lies in ourselves. We Russians have an unlimited confidence in every new theory, in every hypothesis, no matter how superficial, how foolish. The so-called ' Intelligenzia ' are far inferior in common sense and practical questions to the simple Russian peasant, who possesses few notions, few facts, but whose mental faculties and sound judgment have not been spoilt. The fantastic element, deplorably

developed in our middle classes, reaches its zenith amongst our revolutionists. What young revolutionists repeat now I, alas! used to think several years ago. Russia would immensely gain if her young people, instead of meddling with politics, resolved to spend some five or six years on a regular course of lectures and in studying their own country, her present position, and her history. Hundreds of Russian undergraduates perish merely thanks to evil influences from without."

This, unfortunately, is only too true. Such instigators have neither pity nor judgment. Any kind of riot equally serves their purpose, provided it makes mischief and commits foolish reckless boys. Mr. Tikhomirov, describing the difference between the students of 1840 and 1860, shows how superior were those of the former year. Their aspirations were much higher. He relates an anecdote which is charmingly characteristic: "Some undergraduates of the old school were engaged in an animated discussion one day when dinner was announced. 'How can you disturb us?' reproachfully exclaimed one of the orators, who afterwards became a celebrated Russian writer. 'We are just settling the existence (das Sein) of God, and you summon us to . . . dinner.'"

What Mr. Tikhomirov says about the duties of a citizen may be endorsed by every wise patriot. "From the question of culture I now pass to that of autocracy. Whatever constitutes a man's general views, the moment he proclaims himself as opposed to the Tsar he belongs to the welcome set, he is 'one of ours.'"

This reminds one of the Irishman who, on landing in America, declared: "I do not know what is the form of government here, but I am against it."

Let Mr. Tikhomirov, however, continue his own story:

"If you point out the unreasonableness of this view, if you convict him of extreme ignorance, you are met with the protest, how can a man be cultivated as long as there exists in Russia an Autocrat! Unfortunately, such views may be sincere. To my great regret, at one time I used to share them myself. But now what pain they give me! In the first place, no form of government is able to prevent intellectual culture when the people are sincerely anxious to acquire it. Besides, let us refer to history. Were not Peter the Great and the Great Catherine Autocrats? Was it not in the Emperor Nicholas's time that the present social ideas originated? Is there any republic in the world which has carried out such great reforms as those of Alexander II? I regard autocracy in Russia as the result of our history, which cannot and ought not to be abolished so long as tens of millions desire nothing else. I deem unjust, unwise and useless the presumption to interfere with the wishes of a great nation. Every Russian desiring to carry out reforms should do so under the shelter of the autocratic power. Has autocracy prevented Poushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy, etc. etc., from developing the greatest possible progress in literature?

"For argument's sake, suppose that some Russian Emperor consented to impose limits upon his powers. Such concession would be only apparent, not real.

At the slightest hint an enormous majority of the people would disperse the handful of men who ventured to restrict the unlimited power of their Tsar. What every country needs above all is a strong and stable Government, which firmly carries out its programme. Russia needs this even more than any other country. The parliamentary system, although it has some good sides, has proved itself most unsatisfactory—a fact which our critics of autocracy should keep firmly in mind. Unfortunately, our young generation behave in a way to drive a rational statesman mad. One day they take part in a Polish insurrection : another day they try to organise a reign of terror. Like true fanatics, they display a passionate energy, a remarkable self-sacrifice. It is simply deplorable ! "

Mr. Tikhomirov insists over and over again upon the necessity for sound learning and right thinking. In a footnote he still further develops this idea. Insisting upon the evils of half-culture : " I do not mean," he explains, " the small amount of information—a peasant is still less informed—but it is the manner of foolishly adopting anything said by others—on faith, without reflection—which is so fatal. It is the want of mental discipline which I lament."

Mr. Tikhomirov's sketch is of great psychological interest. It throws a true light on Russian nature. Russians, unfortunately, are too impulsive, not to be often misled—which, of course, is deplorable. With all this there lies in their heart of hearts a deep affection for their country, their Church, their traditions, their customs, their language—in fact,

everything Russian. To them "*ubi bene, ibi patria,*" is a faulty phrase ; there is no place where they can be happy when they are banished, when they are anathematised by their native land. Certain feelings are stronger than arguments.

I may be perhaps allowed to quote a case in point. Some years ago a colony of Russian refugees whose life, for some political reason or other, became uncomfortable in Russia, emigrated to Buenos Ayres. They deemed it would be quite easy to acclimatise themselves anywhere. Little by little, however, they discovered, with acute pain, that their soul craved for their former faith. At last they appealed to the representative of the Russian Government, begging him to secure for them a Russian Greek Orthodox priest, offering to build a church and to provide all the necessary means for supporting the clergy. The Russian Government did not hesitate to acquiesce. The Reverend Father Ivanoff, a brilliant theological student, sympathising also with the request, hurried across the seas to undertake this novel duty.

Yes ! It is easy sometimes to be an absentee, but it must be intolerable to feel oneself a renegade ! From this reproach Mr. Tikhomirov is now rescued. "There is more joy over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just men who need no repentance." The Russian authorities, however, were not at once convinced of the genuineness of Mr. Tikhomirov's recantation. But when all the official documents supported his statements, he was allowed to return to Russia at once.

CHAPTER XV

RUSSIAN PRISONS AND PRISONERS

Our Convict System—Misunderstood in England—Siberia, an Emigration Field—A Lax Discipline—Capt. Wiggins' Opinion—A Land of Stoicism—My Experiences as a Prison Visitor—Divine Literature—Helen Voronoff's Work—A Russian Heroine—Her Descriptions of Prison Life

TO the Englishman the word "Siberia" seems to possess a significance so sinister as to make death appear almost a luxury; but imprisonment and the conditions under which the prisoners live are entirely comparative. To condemn a gourmet to live on roast beef and cabbage would be a punishment much greater than to sentence a farm labourer to live on porridge and black bread.

In England our "atrocious convict system" has been a subject for much comment. I think very few people in England have any conception of what Siberia really is.

Some, I have no doubt, who speak most freely about it, would be in some difficulty if they were asked to describe where it is. As a matter of fact it is the northern half of the Continent of Asia, greater in area than the whole of Europe. The north is almost uninhabitable, but we do not send our criminals to the north, but to the fertile south.

It is mostly in the fertile south that our present colonies exist. We used to send to the quicksilver mines only the worst criminals and murderers, with whom I do not think even English people would have much sympathy.

After all, would a man prefer to work in a quicksilver mine or to be hanged ? Another very important point is that transportation to Siberia does not necessarily involve imprisonment. In some cases the convicts are turned loose to look after themselves, and are allowed to go whither they will, provided they do not attempt to return to European Russia. Moreover, the families of the convicts used also to be transported at the expense of the Government—which was, of course, a great consolation to them. But now the whole system of transportation to Siberia has been abolished.

We wish to do with them just what England strove to do with her criminals in the first half of last century—get rid of them. They are undesirable citizens, and as all good government is the greatest good to the greatest number, the best thing that can happen is to get the criminal population away from the non-criminal, so that one does not contaminate the other.

In the old days the English convict was compelled to work under the penalty of " the cat " or the gallows. On the other hand, the Russian convict is sent into Siberia, and there he can do what he chooses, short of actual crime. As a matter of fact, in Russia there is a strong feeling in certain quarters that our convicts have too much liberty.

Let me bring the matter nearer home. Suppose

instead of being sent to Portland and shut up in a grim and gloomy building, English prisoners were sent to the extreme north of Scotland and given their liberty, and told they must not come further south than a certain point, is there any question as to which of the two they would choose ?

If English people could be persuaded to regard Siberia as a huge field for emigration, they would understand things much better, and in sending our convicts there we serve a double purpose—that is to say, we get rid of them, and we are colonising the country that an Englishman has described as " offering unique advantages to a young man with a small capital."

The proportion of prisoners sent to Siberia per annum is about one in every five thousand of the population, not a very high average I think. In England and Wales, I believe, the average is vastly higher.

To give some idea of the lack of constraint on the liberty of the convict, I will give some particulars of escapes.

On one occasion, when a census was taken of the convicts in Tobolsk, out of some fifty thousand exiles only about thirty-four thousand could be found.

At Tomsk, five thousand were missing out of thirty thousand.

There is one very serious drawback to our system, that is our method of pitchforking convicts into Siberia without arranging for their occupation, and the result is that a large number of them refuse to take to honest labour, and become good-for-nothings.

Siberia is not a holiday resort. No one could possibly regard it as challenging the Riviera, for instance; its primary object is to rid European Russia of her criminal population, and in this it succeeds.

The redoubtable Captain Wiggins has described the convicts in Siberia as "a happy, rollicking, joyous community—well clad, well fed, and well cared for."

I do not propose to comment on this, but shall leave the matter between the British Public and the shade of Captain Wiggins. Some may be inclined to recall a passage from Sir Thomas Browne which runs (I quote from memory), "There be those who would credit the relations of mariners."

In the past there has been a tendency in England to look for archangelic qualities in her neighbours, and she has been a little hurt at not finding them. Once when writing to me in 1876, Mr. Gladstone said:

"The history of nations is a melancholy chapter, that is, the history of their Governments. I am sorrowfully of opinion that, though virtue of splendid quality dwells in high regions with individuals, it is chiefly to be found on a large scale with the masses; and the history of nations is one of the most immoral parts of human history."

I have heard it stated of Mr. Gladstone that he was too true a gentleman to be a good politician. Upon that I will venture no comment beyond saying that I am convinced that he never did anything in his life actuated by any other idea than that it was right.

The same morality that applies in private life never has and probably never will apply to Governments, and to expect perfection in relation to the treatment of prisoners in Siberia, or of Chinese labour in South Africa, is out of the question.

I cannot do better than quote here what I said in my introduction to *Siberia As It Is*, by Harry de Windt :

" To form a proper opinion of the Russian prisons, it is necessary to possess, what English people certainly do not possess, some knowledge of the ordinary conditions of life in our country. A preface to any book on Russia ought, in fact, to be somewhat of an introduction into the penetralia of our innermost existence. But in giving real facts about our country, I have the feeling of printing advertisements about ourselves—to us Russians a very antipathetic work indeed.

" Russia is, over a great extent, a land of stoicism, fortified by Christianity—not a bad basis for the formation of character, after all, but it is a hard school. Our country life is an important study. It is full of self-denial, of hardships, of privations. Indeed, in some parts peasant life is so hard that we, the so-called upper classes, could scarcely endure it.

" Landed proprietors are generally in close intercourse with their ex-serfs. The latter, though now perfectly free and themselves landowners, from the fact that their former masters have at heart their welfare, naïvely think that the latter are still under obligation to furnish help when needed. This somewhat amusing relationship is generally accepted good-naturedly by the ex-masters, though very often

it involves great material sacrifices. We could all give our personal experiences of village life, and I, for one, venture to do so, though there are many others better qualified.

"To visit the sick and the poor is a common duty recognised by a great many in our country, although the discharge of this duty sometimes is rather an ordeal. How overcrowded and dark are their dwellings! How poor their daily food! (The only approach to the condition that I know of in the United Kingdom is in the poverty-stricken districts of Ireland and in some corners of the East End of London.) Yet those who lead that rough life seem strong and happy, on the whole. They will make merry jokes, and after a long day's heavy work, from sunrise to sunset, return home from the fields, singing and dancing.

"Injudicious and indiscriminate charity would do harm here as elsewhere. In illustration of this, I will mention the following from my own experience:

"My son, when appointed Zemski Natchalnik (Zemski chief), built a church over his father's grave and founded two schools for training male and female teachers on our Tamboff estate.

"The principal local representatives of the Church and the chiefs of our local school inspectors were invited to discuss the programme of the teaching and management of these schools—one for boarders, future primary school teachers, with a class for daily pupils of the parish. They used to be almost free of charge before the emancipation of the serfs. So were both my son's schools. But now—since they depend on the Holy Synod—education has

to be paid for. The yearly Seminarian's fee for board, dress and education is £10 yearly. The girls' (future school mistresses) fee is £8—but they will soon be increased. All our schools for the people are, and have always been, free of charge.

"The educational scheme met with almost unanimous approval, but when the boarding arrangements came to be discussed, with suggestions about 'light mattresses and pillows,' they were met by a general outburst of disapproval.

"'Here you are wrong. Why should you spoil them, and make them unfit for their usual life, by accustoming them to unnecessary luxuries? The utmost you should provide, as a comfort for peasant boys, is some straw, and a plain bench to sleep on. Nothing more.' I may add, that this stoic simplicity partly accounts for their bravery.

"It may perhaps interest my readers to know that there is such a thirst for learning amongst our peasant children that candidates come in overwhelming numbers, and this happens to all our educational institutions—they are overcrowded to the last degree. The population increases more quickly than church and school accommodation for it. That inconvenience is also noticeable with regard to the children of our prisoners. But to people accustomed to a very hard life, would it be a punishment if, instead of suffering discomfort for their crimes, they were surrounded with what to them would appear extreme luxury? Where is one to draw the line between necessaries and luxuries? A prison ought to be a punishment, not a reward for crimes.

"In visiting the prisons I have heard the remark that some of the convicts would not have committed their misdeeds had they possessed at home half the comforts provided in the prisons, though, of course, the privation of every liberty is already a terrible punishment. They also know that whilst they are away, good care is taken of their children. I remember a female prisoner, who had to suffer a year's punishment for theft and smuggling, whose looks of distress and misery forcibly struck me. Knowing that she was near the end of her term, I asked how it was that she did not look happier.

"'I am pining for my boy; I feel sure he is dead. I wrote to him twice, but he never replied,' answered she, sobbing. 'He was taken up as a beggar and a vagabond by the Beggars' Committee.'

"'Well,' said I, 'since you can tell me where he may be found, I will go and see him at once, and you shall know the exact truth about him. Wait patiently till I come back.'

"Off I went to the 'Beggars' Institution,' which is a branch of the prisons, though geographically a great distance away, and had the boy brought to me. He looked clean and healthy.

"'Your mother sends you her blessing,' I began; 'she is in good health, but grieves that you never answered her letters. Have they not reached you?'

"'Oh yes, they have, but I cannot write. I began learning here, and can only write O's and pothooks.'

"As I always provide myself with writing materials on visiting the prisons, and am always ready in deserving cases to write letters, dictated to

me by illiterate prisoners, I offered my services to the little beggar boy.

"He seemed radiant. 'Yes, tell her that I am very well fed here, three times every day. Food plentiful.'

"'What else?' asked I. 'Would you not like to see your mother? Don't you go to church every Sunday, and don't you pray for her?'

"'Oh yes. Tell her to come to live with me here.'

"You should have seen the joy of the mother when I brought her this very undiplomatic despatch, and the interest created amongst her fellow-prisoners!

"To help the wretched is a pleasure thoroughly appreciated by Russians. It is absurd to preach to us charity and compassion. We are brought up in those notions from our childhood. Christianity with us is not a vague term; it represents a very clear 'categorical principle' which forms a link between all of us, from the Emperor down to the humblest peasant. Our highest classes are very well represented in that respect. First comes our Empress Marie, the present Dowager Empress, who is the soul of charity and compassion. I never heard of any appeal made to her in vain. Nor could anybody, I think, be kinder than the Emperor. His aunt, the Grand Duchess Constantine, notwithstanding the endless demands on her generosity, once undertook to feed a thousand famine-stricken peasants in our district till next harvest. I could also give other examples from amongst the Imperial family.

"Then, coming to a lower rank, we had, for instance, the procurator of the Holy Synod, M. Pobédonostzeff, and his wife. The latter, though far from strong in health, takes care of a large school, visiting it almost daily. With the support and sympathy of her husband, she collected large sums every year in order to send to the prisoners of Sakhalin (our worst criminals) quantities of clothes, useful tools, tobacco and toys, writing materials and religious books. Our lower classes only care for 'divine literature,' as they call it. Religious books are in great demand in every part of Russia, which helps to defeat Nihilistic teaching, and saves the people from that criminal folly.

"Or take another well-known case: a man of good birth and worldly prospects, a distinguished Moscow professor, Serge Ratchinsky, who, without any of that self-advertisement which seems to be the necessary stimulus to similar efforts in Western Europe, buried himself in the country, and there founded a school which has served as a model for ten or twelve other schools in the same province, and which he superintends and guides with fatherly care, and in strictly Greek Orthodox views. He also organised a large temperance movement, which is now spreading throughout Russia.

"I could give numerous instances to show that philanthropy, far from being unknown, is widely practised in Russia. In fact, it permeates all our work, including the prisons.

"Our great Empress, Catherine II, used to say: 'Better pardon ten criminals than punish one innocent.' This became a favourite saying with us,

and perhaps accounts for the leniency of our juries, which is often carried too far. For what right have we to endanger the public safety by allowing crime to reign unchecked ?

" In England murderers are quietly hanged. According to us, this is going too far. How are you to manifest Christian compassion and love to sinners when they are so quickly and definitely disposed of ?

" What chance have they to repent ? Capital punishment is repellent to public feeling in Russia, and has been used in cases which, thank God ! were quite exceptional and extremely rare. With us, only the very worst crimes are punished with imprisonment for life. Even for these it may at all events be said, ' While there is life there is hope.'

" Very great improvements have been introduced in our prison system. More are to follow. We see our shortcomings better than ignorant *dilettante* critics, whose only object is to excite artificial indignation.

" These questions are very important and complicated ; but, as Thiers used to say, ' *Prenez tout au sérieux, rien au tragique.* ' "

It is difficult to write of Russian prisons without reference to the work of my great friend, Helen Voronoff. It has been said, and nothing could be truer, that her whole existence might have been summed up in the three words, " all for others." She killed herself by her devotion to her self-imposed duty as an angel of light in the gloomy recesses of Russian prisons.

The first years of her life were devoted to teaching, but in 1906 she turned her attention to another

MISS HELEN VORONOFF

sphere of activity that had long attracted her, and which turned out to be her life's mission: the bringing of comfort and hope and spiritual light into the lives of criminals in prisons, more especially of political offenders. In spite of her weak health, and of the fact that she had already in her early youth been condemned to death by her doctors, she exhibited the most extraordinary physical and moral energy, and looked upon all fatigue in connection with her work simply as an unavoidable and unimportant detail in the carrying out of her divine mission.

She never hesitated before those excessively tiring and depressing journeys to the Schlüsselbourg Fortress, and other prisons, before wanderings through cold dark cells, and keeping long vigils at the bedsides of the dying. Her influence among the prisoners was so beneficent, that the authorities, in all cases, allowed her to come and go as she pleased, and to visit even the most dangerous criminals in their solitary confinement cells.

On one particular occasion that comes to my mind, two gaolers seriously opposed themselves to her entering a certain cell alone, since the prisoner confined there was a ruffian who literally boasted of having killed twelve persons, and whom it seemed most dangerous for an unprotected woman to approach. Miss Voronoff would not even listen to the gaolers.

"I must go to him quite alone," she insisted. "Your presence would show mistrust on my part and would only wound his feelings."

On her entry, the criminal looked up in surprise.

"Why have you come here alone?" he growled. "I have killed twelve people. Are you not afraid that I shall kill you too?"

"There is no reason why you should do that," was the quiet reply. "I have only come because I should like to help you a little. Your past sins can make no difference."

The prisoner seemed taken aback, and gradually allowed himself to be drawn into a conversation that lasted more than half an hour, after which, when his visitor rose to go, this rough outcast, touched and softened, begged her to come again.

Between her visits to the various prisons, Miss Voronoff spent all her time in correspondence and interviews with the relatives of the prisoners, and in untiring efforts to alleviate their sufferings and soften their fate. Many indeed are the bright moments that this consoling angel brought into the darkness of those hopeless lives!

Miss Voronoff left behind her (she died only recently) an interesting book of sketches entitled *Among the Prisoners*. Never was a book published more worthy of being described as a human document. It is full of the charm and goodness of one saintly personality reacting upon the victims of a great tragedy. The following quotations that I have made from this book are so illuminating as to Russian character that they require no apology or explanation:—

"It was not until after a lapse of six years that I was once more able to visit the Wiborg Cellular Prison, in the consumptive ward of which I first began to work for poor prisoners. Then I was in

the company of Princess Maria Dondoukoff-Korsakoff. Now, this noble woman has gone to her reward, but everything around seemed to speak to me of her. There was not a bed in that ward upon which she had not sat (she seldom, if ever, used the chairs provided, feeling that in this way she was nearer to the patient). And many a sufferer had she comforted. Laying her hand upon his shoulder or his head, she would speak words which, delivered in her sweet and affable voice, could not fail to reach his heart. Ah! how many a heart was softened, how much physical pain relieved, how many souls gained back to God by her sweet ministrations!

"And now, with these dear memories crowding upon me, I visited once again the Wiborg Cellular Prison.

"It has been much improved; now there are two wards for consumptive patients, whereas formerly there was but one, which was both overcrowded and airless. In fact, the place, I remember, on one occasion was so close as to overcome the Princess, who was obliged to lie down and recover before continuing her ministrations to the sick.

"Upon the occasion of this my first visit to the prison after six years, a touching incident occurred, which I should like to recall.

"Upon entering the ward I saw at once that there were three there who would not be long upon this earth, for they remained motionless as I advanced. But the others brightened up at my coming, trying to check their troublesome coughs, and even, where strong enough, raising themselves to greet me.

"During my conversation with them I asked if

those so near their end had received Holy Communion. Upon this point I was reassured, and was much comforted to see how anxious were those not yet about to die that their fellow-sufferers should receive this consolation when the end approached.

" I noticed as I passed along the ward a specially young and handsome face, the face of one of the three about to breathe their last. I drew closer, and silently watched him for a few moments, fearing to rouse him, for his eyes were closed, and his breath was short and interrupted. Bright red spots burnt upon his cheeks.

" As I stood thus his neighbour called him, and, looking above his bed, I read the name, ' Paul Rostchin.'

" ' Why do you disturb him ? ' I asked. The man explained that Rostchin expected me, and wished to ask me something, and that when he regained consciousness he would be very sad that he had not been roused to speak to me.

" After some time, Rostchin opened his eyes. I shall never forget their expression. It was a mingling of pain and hope and entreaty. He tried hard to speak, but, although his lips moved, I could hear no sound.

" Gently I tried to soothe him, begging him to be calm, and telling him that I was in no hurry, and would wait until I understood what it was he wished to say to me.

" At last I caught one word, ' Mother.' ' Ah ! ' said I, ' you are calling your mother ; you want to see her ; perhaps I could find her. Where does she live ? '

"'She is far from here,' he whispered, 'and cannot come.'

"My heart ached for him. It was pitiful to hear him in these his last moments calling for his mother. I bent over him and said:

"'Your own mother, as you say, is far from here; but God has sent me to comfort you. Can you not count me your spiritual mother, and confide in me, when I come to you and sit with you and listen to all you have to say?'

"His face brightened at the thought, and a little strength seemed to return. 'I have something,' he said, 'to tell her before I die.'

"Then I begged him to say to me what he wished to say to her, promising that I would hear it as though I were his mother. Hardly had I said this than the man on the bed at our right, being able to walk, got up and moved away, and the other, who was not equal to that effort, turned his back to us, that he might not hear. I was touched at the feeling displayed by these apparently rough, though simple Russian men.

"And then I made out from his laboured words his sad story. A good, kind, and loving mother abandoned for more than a year and a half, while he suffered in prison. His great wish now was to let her know how much he felt his guilt, and beg for her forgiveness.

"I listened, holding my breath that I might catch the halting words, and as he bared his soul, and made clear the confession he wished to make, it seemed as though a great weight fell from him; and when, from sheer exhaustion, he sank back and closed his

eyes, I knew that the tears were there, as he said brokenly, 'I shall never see her again to tell her this. I have only a few days, perhaps a week, left to live.'

"I never hold out vain hopes to the poor patients when they are about to die, so, seeing how near he was to his end, I did not undeceive him.

"Again I asked him for his mother's address, promising to write and tell her that he was dying, and asked forgiveness, and that I would ask her to reply immediately, so that he might hear the answer before the end. The face of the dying man shone with a great joy; the forgiveness of his mother was all he sought now upon the earth. Then, sinking back upon his bed, he murmured, 'If I get the answer, I shall take it with me.'

"Before leaving the hospital I made the sign of the Cross upon his forehead. His eyes were closed, but he whispered, 'Thanks, thanks.'

"Meeting the doctor on my way out, I inquired whether he thought it was worth while to suggest that the mother should come, or could he last so long. The doctor seemed unable to decide, saying he might live a week or he might die that day.

"Hurrying home, I despatched the promised letter, and for days awaited the answer. Each day I telephoned to the prison for news of the dying man, and each time I received the same reply, 'He is alive, but very weak.' And this for five days.

"On the sixth day, when I came home in the afternoon, my servant met me with the information that a very old woman, poorly dressed, in bast shoes and

a wallet on her back, had been there asking for her son Paul.

" Rostchin's mother, upon the receipt of my letter, had determined to come in person to pardon her son. As the journey cost five roubles twenty copecks, she sold all her possessions, pledging even her felt shoes, thus being forced to travel in bast shoes, in spite of the intense cold. It was her first visit to a large town ; she was bewildered by all she saw ; but her mother's love helped her to surmount all obstacles.

" The next morning, very early, I went to her. In her anxiety to get to her son, she came to the tram with one golosh only over her bast shoe ; the other she had forgotten. It was not until we were on the way that I broke the sad tidings to her that the hospital to which we were going was the hospital of a prison. ' Oh ! Paul, Paul, my beloved son. My darling ! How did you get to prison ? ' she sobbed. ' He was a warrant officer, and now he is in prison.'

" To me it was most touching that she did not once reproach him. She only pitied him without end. She warmly thanked me that I had not mentioned in my letter that he was in prison.

" ' Oh, God ! Oh, Holy Virgin Mary ! Let me find him alive ; let me but hear one word from him ; let him look on me only one moment,' prayed the old woman.

" We found, on our arrival at the prison, that Rostchin yet lived, but to give an adequate description of the meeting between mother and son I feel is beyond me.

" When I led the poor woman into the room where Rostchin lay, and showed her the bed on which he was stretched, she staggered, and would have fallen had I not supported her. But her eyes fell on the picture of a saint, and, making the sign of the Cross, she approached the bedside of her son. He was so weak that he could not even turn his head, but tears rolled down his cheeks, and the poor mother, bending over him, gazed so earnestly into his eyes that her tears fell and flowed with his.

" ' Forgive me, forgive me, my own mother. I am very guilty,' repeated the dying man.

" ' My son, my dear son Paul, God will forgive you,' wept the sorrowing woman.

" I could stand the scene no longer, and I withdrew. When later I returned, some of the sick prisoners came up and thanked me for the great joy I had given to Rostchin.

" Once more was I thrilled to find such feelings in these poor prisoners, themselves suffering and outcast, yet rejoicing with their fellow-sufferer. It is easy to weep with those who weep, but when one's own heart is sad and suffering, is it so easy to rejoice with those that rejoice ? Envy so easily creeps in.

" Rostchin did not live long after the visit of his mother. Having received her pardon, he became calmer, asked for the clergyman, and once more received the Holy Sacrament. His death was that of a good Christian. His sufferings were great, but he remained still in the same peaceful disposition. Before he breathed his last, he repeated again and again, ' Forgive, forgive ! '

" It is interesting to note that his mother did not remain until the end, but, having pardoned and blessed her son, asked to be sent back to her home.

" This is characteristically Russian. Having satisfied herself that his soul was prepared to meet his God, she was less anxious about the dying body, asking only to be informed when God had called him away.

" I let her know when all was over, and in reply received a simple and touching letter, in which she begged me to ' go to his grave, take from it a handful of earth, and send it to me.'

" What treasures lie hidden in the faithful soul of the simple Russian ! "

CHAPTER XVI

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Dostoyevsky's Call—His Retort to a Dandy—Russia and the Revolution—The Court of Imperial Mercy—How Political Prisoners may Solicit Pardon—The Coach-driver's Letter—The People's Belief in the Emperor—A Typical Russian Appeal—Military Offenders—How they have Justified the Emperor's Clemency—Political Prisoners and the War

THE name of Dostoyevsky is fortunately well known in England, so perhaps I may be allowed to relate an incident in connection with him.

He called on me one afternoon and began talking of his life in Siberia, and the wonderfully beneficial effect it had had upon him. We were interrupted by a flippant young dandy, just arrived from abroad, who chattered animatedly about his impressions of various ballets and theatres. I thought he would never stop, and felt rather angry. Dostoyevsky, however, listened attentively, his wonderful, dark velvet eyes, with the deep expression so peculiar to them, fixed kindly on the gossiper. After a while he remarked, "I am interested in what you say. There is life in you, artistic instinct and good nature. If you could spend thirteen years in a Siberian prison, as I have done, it would be most beneficial to you, and might make you a useful, energetic member of society."

Dear Dostoyevsky! How often have I remembered that strange remark, and how often also have I thought that prison life indeed sometimes makes people serious, patient and religious. Of late, unfortunately, one has often been haunted by questions connected with prisons. My late friend, W. T. Stead, expressed the pious opinion quite seriously, how useful it would be if everybody—innocent as well as guilty—were made to spend one or two months in prison.

Of all horrible wars, the most horrible, I think, is internal strife, for the suppression of which, Governments always use strong measures. Are they to be blamed for measures taken with the object of saving their country from dismemberment? I think not—though indeed, personally, I am happy not to be obliged to mete out justice on such occasions. But then, I always think that to judge one's neighbours fairly is no easy task. When Thiers had to save France from the Commune, he unhesitatingly killed several thousand Communards—some say 200,000 were punished, some say 20,000, there are also people who speak of only 2000. But who can use the word "only," when it is followed by thousands of killed?

In the year 1905, Russia had the misfortune of experiencing a revolution at home. The majority of the people, of course, understood the criminal folly of that movement, and the insurgents were mostly misguided dreamers who did not realise the rascality of their leaders, such as Gapon and others. Many of them, indeed, afterwards looked back with deep regret and even shame, on their folly. I have

known some of them, and it is difficult to say with what deep feeling of commiseration I listened to them, and now remember their words. If there be exaggeration and contradiction with regard to the numbers of the punished Communards, there is similar difficulty in fixing the numbers of our own culprits. Upon that point I am not going to insist. Even one death is often the cause of endless pain.

In England I have only once seen any mention of that Court of Appeal by which Russian political prisoners who repent of their ways may solicit the Imperial clemency.

The exact title of that institution is "The Court of Petitions addressed to the Emperor," or "The Court of Imperial Mercy." It was founded in the sixteenth century in the reign of John IV, under the control of Alexis Adasheff (whose life and character have so brilliantly adorned the pages of Russian history) and his friend and ally, the Rev. Father Sylverst, who was another bright star of that period. But, after their disappearance from the field of action, the institution failed to be marked by the same zeal and success as previously. Once more was it shown that, in every human effort, personal character plays a greater part than the written law. For, however perfect may be the law, its application must be varied by circumstances, and is thus greatly dependent upon the personal character of its administrators.

Fortunately, however, Peter the Great, with his masterly genius, recognised the importance of such a Court in an autocratic country where the power of doing generous work is in the hands of a ruler who

stands above conventional formalities, or obsolete customs, of parties or of newspapers. Nor did Peter the Great fail to realise that an exact knowledge of real facts was of vital importance to the proper exercise of such power. To secure this, therefore, he introduced new and very drastic regulations and reforms.

He made it a rule that the head of the Court was to be bound by a solemn and patriotic oath of fidelity to his charge. At the same time he was to be allowed a larger initiative, by which his personal power was increased. He became entitled to delegate powers to other administrative offices and courts, by which the work of the institution became more decentralised.

But although it was thus understood that appeals to the Emperor personally were to be allowed only in special cases, yet little by little these personal appeals became more and more numerous, and were with difficulty controlled by the head of the Court.

When the Empress Catherine the Great ascended the throne, that wonderful monarch resolved that she would personally receive all appeals to mercy. But it soon became evident that such a task was beyond the powers of even her exceptional energy. Catherine herself relates that on one occasion she found it impossible to reach church, owing to the crowds of petitioners who knelt before her with petitions in their hands.

Such a condition of affairs, of course, could not possibly continue. In the following year the Empress appointed three high officials, called State Secretaries, to whom she gave detailed instructions which

show the great pity she felt for such petitioners. The secretaries were to communicate personally with the petitioners "kindly, patiently, indulgently," and to extract from them all necessary details and explanations. For this purpose reference had sometimes to be made to the separate tribunals before whom special cases had to go. But sealed letters addressed privately and confidentially "in His Majesty's own Hands" (as the Russian expression goes), still reach the Emperor without any intervention. And this happens even now.

Not long ago I heard of a boy, a poor little coach-driver, who addressed a pitiful letter of this kind to the Emperor Alexander III when he was in the Crimea, and not only was the letter received, but the request generously granted.

To return to old times, the Emperor Paul, while young and in good health, tried to imitate the great Empress Catherine, and endeavoured to come into contact with people who appealed to his mercy. To facilitate this a large, yellow iron box was attached to one of the ground-floor windows of the Winter Palace (Petrograd) in which petitions were to be deposited. This box had to be periodically opened by the State Secretaries, and the contents submitted to the Emperor for orders. Some, when too absurd, were partially torn and returned through the Post Office. Others were published in the *Petersburg Gazette*, with the reason for their refusal. In 1799 the same Emperor Paul issued a rather strange ukase, forbidding the presentation of unreasonable requests. No doubt the question of what was and what was not reasonable was not an

easy one, and the unfortunate box could hardly hold the burden of its strange correspondence. It obviously became necessary to dispense with this original method of communication.

In the time of Alexander I, thanks to the great Speransky's efforts, a "Commission of Appeals" was established, and in the time of the Emperor Nicholas I the "Court of Petitions" was reformed more or less on the basis upon which it now exists. The members are appointed by the Emperor himself. To their former duties have been added others relating to orphans and lunatics. Certain rules have to be observed by petitioners, and they must have lived in the realm not less than one year.

By the wish of His Majesty the reasons for refusals to grant favours are sometimes given, but this law cannot always be observed.

The Emperor has recently given orders to enlarge the Court's sphere of work by accepting appeals to Imperial mercy for criminal charges, and administrative misdemeanours.

Finally, I will note the fact that in the year 1908 there were 65,357 petitions through this Court, out of which 64,174 were fortunate enough to obtain the Imperial order for immediate attention. As a rule there are about 65,000 petitions presented yearly. Imperial benevolence (mercy) shown to children amounts to 10,000 cases in famine years.

During the war His Majesty ordered from the coffers of the "Court of Petition" no less a sum than 178,000 roubles for the wounded soldiers.

"If anyone were to tell the Russian people that the Emperor had not the power to help them, they

would never believe such an assertion," observed Baron Budberg (the late head of the Petition Department), "and may that belief in His Majesty's power always remain with the Russians." The Emperor's remark on this statement was that Baron Budberg was right.

"Let those who require my mercy come to me with their sorrows in confidence."

And many, many are the thousands who have been made happy—thanks to that Court of Appeal.

People in England often talk about red tape. It is not for me to judge whether their complaints are well founded—but naturally, when one comes in contact with official pedantry, one is inclined to grumble and lose one's temper, though this as a rule does not mend matters. But to get the better of red tape—ah! that is useful and pleasant. There are occasions even when it may become a great blessing, as in the following, which I hope I may be allowed to relate :

In Russia, the Court of Appeal to Mercy allows everybody to appeal to the mercy of the Emperor. It is not difficult to understand that there are great differences in the nature of such appeals, and, in Russia, as likewise in England, prisoners are not allowed to publish their grievances, and still less their appeals to the head of the State. However, by a very happy mistake, such an appeal from the political prisoners slipped, at the end of last year, into one of our best Petrograd papers. The following is a translation of this appeal which may be of interest to English readers :

"Your Imperial Majesty, most merciful Tsar. In

this tragic hour of our beloved Russia's destiny, we, the prisoners in the Petrograd prison of solitary confinement, approach the footstool of your Majesty's throne, our hearts full of love and boundless devotion, our suffering souls burning with prayers for the victory of our heroic Russian troops.

"Within the walls of this prison, we are paying the penalty of our sins. We are far from our homes, far from the heart of the Russian people, doomed to confinement and exile; the only light in our darkness is our faith in the mercy of God and the Tsar.

"It is not for us to judge of the sorrow we have caused our beloved country—but in the moment of her great trial our Russian hearts beat with but one care: that of her well-being. We have, indeed, no personal cares.

"We have read with tears of deep emotion these words of the Imperial call: 'In this hour of trial let all internal disagreements be forgotten,' and we pray that God may move the heart of the Emperor and the heart of the people, to forget also our past sins, to return to us the privilege of taking our places in the ranks of those who arise and go forth in all the fullness of their youth and strength to defend the honour and glory of our country.

"It is not a lack of courage to suffer our punishment which prompts us to make this appeal for mercy; we were condemned at various times, and have never before dared to voice any such prayer—but these tragic days, in which countless numbers of our physically weaker brothers are laying down their lives on the battlefield, fill our souls with one

profound desire. Most merciful sovereign, call us into the ranks of your loyal army, and, having paid for our sins with our sufferings, we will join our brothers, inspired with an unshakable faith in your Imperial goodness and mercy.

"The dawn of this national war has awakened our souls, has renewed in us the sense of our duty and our right to defend Russia, side by side with all Russians.

"May the war renew our lives for the benefit of the Russian people, or accept them as an offering to our Russian soil. In the silence of our solitary cells, we pray that God may save and keep your Imperial Majesty, and all the August Imperial family."

This appeal, thank God, was not overlooked by His Majesty. I myself know of two cases where former prisoners were allowed to go to the war, where they acquitted themselves splendidly—so much so, that one of them, whose case is known to me, now wears the Cross of St. George for bravery.

A decree of His Majesty has already been applied to another section of prisoners, the military offenders. This special decree gave to the commanders of the various military districts the right to take into active service for the duration of the war such of the military prisoners in their jurisdiction whom they consider deserving of the right to win, by bravery in the field, the possibility of future pardon.

This right has been widely utilised, with the result that of 4786 military prisoners, 4091 had, by January 1st, 1915, been taken into active service. Of these, 1203 have remained under their particular

district commanders, most of them working in munition factories, and the remaining 2888 have been distributed among various regiments at the front, and in the reserve; the actual number of military prisoners still confined is 393.

There are, of course, criminals and criminals, and among them are many who represent a real danger to society, and who, in other countries, would be sentenced to death immediately after their trial. Our legislation, however, remembers the saying of Catherine the Great, "Better pardon ten who are guilty, than kill one who is innocent." We also think that every culprit should have time to repent, and thus to be able to meet death with greater calm, and confidence in God's pardon.

After the outbreak of the Great European War many political prisoners in Russia made appeal to the Tsar to be allowed to fight for their country against the Germans. Many people in Russia would have welcomed a general amnesty to political prisoners for this purpose. There are among these men many who deeply regret their political mistakes and past illusions.

They have offended against her laws, but still love and wish to stand by her in the hour of trial. The country would gain much by such an amnesty. New forces would doubtless rise to the surface, with new feelings of gratitude for the opportunity thus afforded them of helping Russia, and of sacrificing their lives for the national cause.

Some ten years ago, in the days of our revolution, almost half of Russia was acting, as many of us thought, mistakenly and foolishly, and making even

serious sacrifices for this folly. Fortunately, such a regrettable state of affairs did not last long, and I was soon able to dream of founding a society for the reclamation and return to Russia of those who had outlived their ideas of revolution and who, after all, loved Russia, right or wrong. Unfortunately, this scheme met with numerous obstacles. Such a society would have required not only many members, but also a cautious committee, one not liable to fall into traps—and I failed to procure them.

Since the beginning of the war this question has again been constantly in my mind, and I have spent many hours in discussing it with my friend, Helen Voronoff, and she was entirely of my opinion in the matter.

We read together a most touching petition signed by 110 political prisoners, confined in a Petrograd prison. It was composed by one of themselves, and handed round among the prisoners for signature.

It seems to me that such petitions should not remain unheard.

CHAPTER XVII

THE GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE AND PRINCE OLEG

A Remarkable Personality—The Grand Duke's Graciousness—His Tact and Sympathy—The Wounded Soldier—A Censored Book—Prince Oleg and my Brother Alexander—A Talented Child—A Strange Premonition—The Prince's Interest in Public Affairs—His Studious Nature—The Prince Wounded—His Joy on Receiving the Cross of St. George—He Becomes Worse—The End

THE late Grand Duke Constantine (known in the literary world as "K.R.") was a man of remarkable character and personality, richly endowed alike in imagination and those qualities that make for friendship.

He was, of course, widely known and admired for his remarkable musical and literary talents, and not in Russia alone, while his famous drama, *The King of the Jews*, revealed in addition a powerful intellect, combined with deep religious feeling. This greatest and last of the Imperial poet's works has been translated into several foreign languages. It has awakened universal admiration, and has been enthusiastically praised by the Press of most European capitals. All this, however, is too well known to need repetition. Let me, therefore, turn to another and still more personal aspect of the Grand Duke's character: the extraordinarily attractive graciousness and the sympathetic intuition that endeared him to all who had the privilege of coming into

intimate contact with him. Here, indeed, was a precious and priceless quality—the gift of unfailing tact and exceptional intuition, the power always to say the right thing at the right moment, and to enter warmly and cordially into the thoughts and feelings of others.

I will quote an instance: I am deeply devoted to the memory of my two brothers, Alexander and Nicolas, but, realising that this fact is of interest to no one but myself, I seldom speak of it. The Grand Duke, however, seemed to have read what was written in my very soul. I had the privilege of conversing with him at some length on only two occasions, but they were occasions I shall never forget. The other occasions were passing and rather superficial. The first time, he spoke to me at length of nothing but the Slav question and the death of my brother Nicolas. The Grand Duke remembered all the details of my brother's untimely end in Serbia.

On the second occasion—alas! I was destined never to see the dear Grand Duke again—our conversation was dedicated to the memory of my brother Alexander and to Old Catholicism and Slavophilism, to which my brother devoted his whole life, and of which he spoke even in his very last moments. I must add that I had edited two large volumes of my brother's works in Russian, but had hesitated to send them to the Grand Duke, contenting myself with offering him my Berne editions of Alexander Kiréeff's French works, which, as far as I know, are unobtainable in Russia. With his usual amiability, the Grand Duke had thanked me by letter—

THE GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE NICOLAÉVITCH

and now, how indescribably kind and charming was the manner in which he reproached me for not giving him *all* I had edited !

There was another trait in the Grand Duke's character, which, to me, had a peculiar charm : I refer to his ever-ready sympathy and interest in all cases where his influence or help might be of advantage. It goes without saying that neither my brother nor myself ever appealed to this kind interference unless we had thoroughly investigated the case in question. The Grand Duke was aware of this, and his help was always immediately forthcoming, without any needless delays or formalities, and without a trace of the distressing red-tapeism that is elsewhere often responsible for so much mischief and sorrow.

One meets with just this same kindness and compassion when one approaches our beloved Emperor. One has only to be absolutely free from all egotistical aims, and to be known as were my two brothers —and once this is so, no appeal to the Imperial sympathy is ever neglected or fruitless.

It is, of course, exceedingly difficult to reach His Imperial Majesty, not only because of his exalted position as Emperor, but also by reason of his being overwhelmed by work. He hardly ever limits himself to an eight-hours' day labour. An eight-hours' day would be almost a rest to our Emperor. There is no Trades Union rule for the protection of Kings.

But let me return to my kind Grand Duke.

Perhaps I may be allowed to quote two incidents that took place a few weeks before his death. There had been brought to my notice a wounded soldier,

whose case was particularly tragic. His friends considered nothing so desirable as to have him received in the hospital founded by the Dowager Grand Duchess Constantine, the mother of the Grand Duke. I wrote to His Imperial Highness on the subject, and in the course of the same day received a kind reply, informing me that the matter had been arranged and that the soldier would be at the hospital in a few hours' time.

The second incident was concerned with the publication of a book. In all cases where members of the Imperial family are involved, certain formalities have to be observed by our censors—failing which the book may have to be greatly altered, or suppressed. Anyone connected with literary work knows that such alterations are sometimes extremely costly and troublesome. A dear friend of mine, who had very little money to spare, had written a book that was threatened with difficulties of this order. I wrote to the Grand Duke explaining the facts, and here again everything was immediately and satisfactorily arranged.

I could give countless other instances, but the above, which I have taken at random, are sufficiently characteristic.

I have often had occasion to speak of the Grand Duke, and have always noticed with the deepest pleasure that the mention of his name awakened everywhere, even among people who knew him but slightly, feelings of sincere affection and devotion. The fascination exercised by his personality was unfailing. His literary gifts appealed to poets, his musical talent to musicians—but to me, his most

charming and touching quality was that deep, indescribable sympathy and insight which seemed to enable him to read people's souls. Such sympathy, such intuition, is a great living force! Yes —God sometimes sends into the world exceptional people, who can never be replaced, and whose very memory radiates like a warm, shining light, where their footsteps have passed.

Of such, unquestionably, was our never-to-be-forgotten Grand Duke Constantine.

On one occasion he wrote the following letter, which I quote as showing the charm with which he expressed himself:

DEAR AND HIGHLY-ESTEEMED MADAME NOVIKOFF,

Again I take up the pen to thank you heartily for the new series of valuable and curious autographs, with which you so graciously enriched my collection, that I already owe to your generosity. The Ikon of Christ of Andrea del Sarto, before which your brother always prayed, forwarded to me by General M. E. Keppen for Pavlovsk, is placed here at the Palace Church, on the Chancel, where all our family attends church service and where your dear brother often prayed as well. This beautiful Image will remain a prayer memorial to Alexander Alekseevitch, who lived so many years in his favourite Pavlovsk. I hope you will acquiesce in the choice I made for this most valuable Image of Christ the Saviour—in the Pavlovsk Church.

Allow me to kiss your hand, asking you to keep me your kind friendship in the future.

Your heartily devoted, etc.,

CONSTANTINE.

On October 27th, 1914, I received from him the following note: "It is just a month to-day since our beloved son was wounded—not 'slightly' as seemed at first to be the case, but mortally. God gives and God takes away. May His name be blessed now and for ever more."

It will be seen by the date of this note that Prince Oleg, then only twenty-one years of age, was one of the early victims of the war. At the time I little thought that the Grand Duke himself would soon follow his gifted son, Prince Oleg Constantinovitch.

Until the recent appearance of his biography, the fame of Prince Oleg was too little known, and it certainly had not travelled far outside Russia.

To me, this charming Prince was particularly dear; for I had seen him taking such affectionate care of my brother, Alexander Kiréef, who was already blind, ill and dying. The young man used to come, and talk to him, the principal defender of "Old Catholicism," of the efforts to revive the pure teachings of the Church, as it was before the division of the churches in the ninth century. No subject was dearer to my brother's heart, and, seeing the beneficial influence of these conversations, the young Prince returned to the subject many times in my presence.

One day he said: "General, nobody has ever been so useful as you in supporting the Old Catholic movement. You are my father's friend, and I am as proud of you as he is."

Yes, I shall never forget with what loving eyes the young man gazed into the clever beautiful face

before him, where the eyes were already dim and on the point of being closed for ever. How terribly vividly some moments come back to our memory.

The talented child of a talented father, it was early evident that Prince Oleg had inherited the brilliant gifts of the Grand Duke. It is barely two years since *The King of the Jews* was produced with immense success at the Hermitage Theatre in the Winter Palace at Petrograd, the Grand Duke himself, as well as his sons, taking part in the performance.

Prince Oleg was clearly marked out as belonging to the elect of the earth, and by his early death not only has Russian literature been deprived of a future shining light, but the most cultured circles of Petrograd society are the poorer for the loss of a personality, touching and lovely in its goodness and unselfishness, and its youthfully enthusiastic and unswerving sense of duty and obligation.

The young Prince's biography concerns itself with the reminiscences of Prince Oleg's early governesses and later tutors, with his diaries and rough sketches, countless unfinished stories and poems, and also with a particularly interesting undertaking in connection with Poushkin's works.

Poushkin was the boy's ideal from his earliest days, and it was this love for the great poet and his works that gave him the desire to enter the same Lyceum (College) at which Poushkin had been educated. This desire was realised, the completion of his course happening to coincide with the centenary celebrations of Poushkin's birth. On leaving, Prince Oleg presented to the Institution

a personally executed facsimile of all the Poushkin manuscripts, carefully treasured in the Poushkin museum, which were written while the poet was a student at the college. The young enthusiast afterwards conceived the idea of editing the whole of Poushkin's works in this fashion, bringing them out in loose sheets and unbound folios, and distributing them among museums and book-lovers. The work was carried out mostly by means of the most detailed and perfect photographic reproduction, not even omitting the smallest line, point, or blemish in the paper. Unhappily this labour of love was not destined to be completed, but as much as has been done is a wonder of execution and a real literary treasure.

For the general reader, perhaps the most attractive pages of the biography are those that deal with the Prince's early years, recent as they are.

"I sometimes try to imagine," he writes in one of the diaries of his childhood, "what would happen in my own immediate circle if I were to die. What would my friend do? I suppose he would grow pale and thin, and would fret terribly. I see him in imagination, mounting the steps of my catafalque to bid me a last good-bye, and I see mama's expression as she follows him with her eyes.

"And then, suddenly, it seems curiously pleasant to have all these people thinking of me so regretfully! There flashes across my mental vision a copy of the *Novoye Vremya*, and I see on the first page, in large letters, the announcement of my death. I notice also that there is a reproduction of my photograph—and for a moment, I stop to wonder which

photograph they will publish. All this gives me extraordinary satisfaction.

"But the pleasantest thought of all is that the *Novoye Vremya* will print an obituary notice saying that I took my Degree at the Lyceum, that I won the Poushkin medal, and that they liked me there. Perhaps even Radloff himself may write a memoir of his late pupil. At this point, I stop . . . really, I was going too far, it is very ridiculous, and I am ashamed of myself! I wrinkle my brow, and try to decide seriously whether I should really be willing to die just now. My inner consciousness tells me that actually, it would be stupid to die before having accomplished anything. No, not for the world . . . I don't want to die without fame, without having done anything, without deserving to be remembered by anybody."

How touching this is—especially now, when one can regard it as something like a presentiment.

Interesting from another standpoint is the description by the then thirteen-year-old Prince Oleg of the reception by the Emperor, at the Winter Palace, of the Deputies of the first Duma in 1905. The young, awakening soul of the child trembled with awe and ecstasy. His eyes, fixed on the Emperor, noted every shade of tone and expression, and his description, too long for quotation here, is glowing in the extreme.

On February 10th of the same year he writes:

"Something unusual is in the air. It is said that on the 19th there will be a rising in the whole of Russia. Recently M—— sent a secret telegram to Simferopol. A message has also come from the

Crimean Division—they have caught a Revolutionist. They say there is a plot to blow up Livadia. There has been a rising in St. Petersburg and disorders in the suburbs of Moscow. On the 4th Uncle Serge was murdered. Poor Uncle Serge! mama has written us horrible details—she says we have lost a true friend. This awful incident has made a deep impression on us all. May it be God's will that everything should right itself somehow. Disorders in every town! How painfully this must affect mama! It is a long time since I last received a letter from her."

Then a page about Port Arthur!

"What have we lived to see! Stoessel has surrendered Port Arthur! It appears there was no possibility of holding out any longer. Kondratenko is killed. Yes, many heroes have fallen at Port Arthur."

How significant and how true are the following words, which show a remarkable insight in a boy so young:

"Our Government is composed chiefly, not of Russians, but of Germans—and, of course, Germans do not care what becomes of us. Naturally, the result is that Russians lose. We are too careless—we do not sufficiently educate ourselves. It is imperative that every Russian should work at himself and educate himself from his childhood."

When one considers that the writer of the above lines was barely thirteen years old, one cannot but wonder as much at the serious trend of his thoughts as at the simplicity of his style.

Here is another charming page from about the same period, a little earlier :

" To-day I received a letter from my tutor, I. M. It was so touching that I nearly burst into tears—but of course I restrained myself. How stupid I was, when, at first, I was glad of the war ! [Between Russia and Japan.] How much suffering, how many orphaned families it has occasioned ! At the beginning I wanted to run away and go to the front. If, during our journey to the Crimea, it should be God's will to send me to the war now, I should still be happy. To-day at lunch they were saying that there were only 10,000 left in Port Arthur, that Port Arthur cannot hold out. At six o'clock in the evening, I shut myself up in my room and prayed that God might help us. I took my Prayer Book, and thought to myself, ' I will open it just at random, and read. Perhaps I may chance on something suitable, just for the war.' I opened the book and read, '*Special prayers for times of war!*' "

The above is an extract from a diary.

" The education of the young Prince and his brothers," says the *Novoye Vremya* in an interesting article on the life of Oleg Constantinovitch, " was very systematic and thorough. They rose at half-past six, were taken for a morning walk in the park, and at eight were already at their lessons. Each lesson lasted forty minutes, and between it and the next there was an interval of twenty minutes. There were from four to five lessons daily. Luncheon was at one, and from two to four the young Princes rode daily with their uncle, the Grand Duke Dimitri. From four to seven preparation for the following

day, at seven dinner, then forty minutes' reading with one of the teachers of foreign languages, then drawing and dancing. An arduous day's work indeed!"

Here is another charming extract from the diary:

"We must study hard and prepare ourselves. Perhaps we must work even more seriously than did the rulers of to-day in their youth. There are hard times coming—and hard times call for serious preparation. The further we get from the year of Christ's birth, the harder grow the times, and the harder the times, the more necessary a thorough preparation."

These are wonderful words from a boy of twelve.

The following words, also written in his diary, this time in the train when homeward bound after a summer spent abroad, are interesting in their charmingly expressed and idealistic patriotism:

"We are already nearing beloved Russia. Behind us is France, with her joyous, charming, talented people, with Paris, Versailles, and Napoleon's tomb. Now we are passing through this dull Germany, in an hour we shall have crossed the Russian border. Yes, in an hour I shall be in Russia, that dear land where there breathes something sacred, unknown in other lands, on the face of whose soil are scattered churches and monasteries, in the mysterious twilight of whose ancient cathedrals there rest in silver coffins the bones of her sons, in whose dim shrines the faithful kneel constantly at prayer before the solemn sacred images of her saints. In my beloved Russia there are still dreamy forests, immeasurable steppes, and impassable marshes.

"There are moments in one's life when suddenly with a deep, passionate impulse one realises how one loves one's country. In those moments one longs unspeakably to work, to help, to do something worthy, to devote one's life to the service of Russia!"

A later extract from his diary is the following:

"We are five brothers and are all going to the war with our regiments. This fact pleases me immensely, for it proves that at a trying moment the Imperial Family knows how to rise to the occasion.

"On the 20th of July, Germany declared war against us. On the same day we were commanded to assemble at the Winter Palace at 3.30. The streets were crowded and there was tremendous cheering as we passed. In the Nicolaevsky Hall there were first prayers, and then the Manifesto was read. During the prayers the whole assemblage sang, 'Save us, O Lord,' and 'God save the Emperor!' [the Russian National Anthem.]

"At the moment when the Emperor drove up to the Palace, the whole dense crowd on the great square on their knees. We were all overcome and wept with emotion."

The Prince never had the slightest presentiment of his death, and was afraid only for his brothers. "I am constantly anxious," he wrote, "about Kostia, Gabriel and John, but perhaps principally about Igor. For myself, I fear nothing. Something tells me that no bullet will so much as touch me."

God willed it otherwise! The Prince was wounded during an attack on Vladislavov by the Second Division of the Guards. Our side started the firing.

The Germans retreated, but were stopped by a detachment of our Hussars. At this point Prince Oleg, longing for action, eagerly begged his commander, Count Ignatieff, to allow him with his men to rush forward and seize this handful of Germans.

For a long time the commander refused to accede to this request, but, at last, allowed himself to be persuaded and gave in. Misfortune came immediately. Prince Oleg, fired with youthful enthusiasm, rode fast and far in advance of his men. The Germans were caught up, five of them were killed, the rest surrendered. Suddenly, a wounded trooper fired from the ground. A report—and the Prince fell. Alas, the wound, taken at first to be quite slight, turned out, on closer examination, to be only too severe, and very soon—possibly through the unavoidable delay in operating—blood poisoning set in. The operation was performed at Vilna, after a long and weary journey, first in a plain jolting cart, the only conveyance at hand—and then in the train. The Prince regained consciousness very quickly and felt well. A telegram arrived from the Emperor, conferring on him the Order of the Cross of St. George; also came a telegram from the Grand Duke Nicolas.

"It was good to see the Prince's joy," writes an eye-witness of the scene, "and the pride with which he showed me both these telegrams."

In the evening the Principal of the Military College at Vilna visited the patient and congratulated him on having suffered and been wounded for his country.

"I am so happy," exclaimed the Prince in answer. "So happy. This was most necessary. It will encourage the troops to know that the Imperial House is not afraid to shed its blood."

The Prince was very animated and beamed with joy at the consciousness of his own suffering for his beloved country. At times it was evident, in spite of his effort to hide the fact, that he was in great pain.

Here is a very interesting letter from the Grand Duke Constantine's aide-de-camp, who was with the Prince during all these terrible days. This letter is published by the *Moscow Gazette :*

"At about one o'clock in the night, I was told that the Prince had just awakened. I immediately went to him. He was pale as death. At the sight of me a troubled, welcoming smile lit up his youthful features. 'Nicolas!' he exclaimed. 'Here you are at last! Heavens, how glad I am now that you have come! Now you shall not leave me again. I will not let you go.'

"'Of course I shall not leave you,' I answered with emotion. 'Here we shall stay together till we are quite well again.'

"'Yes . . . yes . . . together . . . till I . . . get . . . well. . . .'

"So convinced was he that his recovery was to be speedy and certain. One had to swallow one's tears and to hide one's grief.

"'Has Igor told you everything?' he continued. 'The Emperor has given me the St. George. I am so happy! There is the telegram, there, on the table.'

"I sat down beside the bed, as he asked me, and tried to talk; but soon noticed that he was falling into a state of semi-consciousness. At my slightest movement, however, he opened his eyes and exclaimed: 'There, he is gone—and I said I would not let him go!'

"At about eight o'clock in the morning the Prince grew more restless. He constantly asked to be moved from one side to the other, now putting his arms under his head, now embracing me feverishly and stifling a cry or a groan.

"A telegram arrived, saying that the young hero's parents were on the way to him and would be with him at five o'clock. At midday the doctors examined the patient again and found the pulse good, and the poisoning not advancing. There was still hope. At about four o'clock, however, a change for the worse suddenly set in. The breathing became more frequent and the pulse weaker. There were signs of sepsis and delirium. The train by which the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess were arriving was two hours late. In the meanwhile the patient's strength was failing minute by minute, and it became necessary to recur to the aid of injections to stimulate the heart's action. His lips were constantly moistened with champagne, and in order to hide from the Prince the hopelessness of his condition, we filled our glasses and told him that we were all drinking with him to his speedy recovery. It was horrible beyond words, and never in my life shall I forget those few sips of champagne in the presence of the dying Prince!

"Clear consciousness alternated with delirium.

At seven o'clock he suddenly threw his poor little thin arms round my neck and whispered, 'Like this. . . . Like this . . . together . . . to meet them.' I thought at first that he was wandering, but no! He was alluding to the arrival of his parents. At last they came. For one moment he recognised them. The Grand Duke had brought his dying son the Cross of St. George from his Imperial uncle.

"'The little white cross! . . . The little white cross! . . .' whispered Prince Oleg, and he bent forward slightly and kissed the shining enamel. We pinned the Cross to his shirt. Presently the patient began to gasp for air, and it was clear that the end was near. Those awful moments of silent waiting, those last short breaths . . . how terrible is the mystery of death. At 8.20 the young life closed. . . ."

A deep and real love breathed in all his life, doubly touching through the purity and transparency of the innocent heart in which it throbbed. Perhaps his soul, looking down from Paradise, can see the tear-dimmed eyes of many Russians gazing sadly up to Heaven's gates through which the beloved young hero has passed.

Russia is loyal to her sons. She will never forget them.

CHAPTER XVIII

BULGARIA'S DEFECTION AND PRISONERS OF WAR

Russia Blamed for the Balkans Muddle—Bulgaria's Treachery—Gen. Grant on the Russians and Constantinople—Bulgaria's Dissatisfaction—The Reign of the Fox—The Treatment of Prisoners of War—The German Method—The Allies' Failure—Lack of Organisation—Insidious German Propagandism—Britain and Her Prisoners in Germany

MANY people blame Russia for what is going on in the Balkans. They may, perhaps, be more right than one would imagine, but probably not quite in the way they suppose! In political, as in private life, there are moments when one must be guided only by the criterion of one's own duty and conscience, whether one pleases the world or not, whether even one is openly blamed or not. Russia, unfortunately, has not always observed this principle.

It seems to me that in politics nothing is so dangerous as to be more carried away by cosmopolitanism than by patriotism, and to forget one's own feelings and duties in one's desire to please some other Power. Cosmopolitanism kills patriotism. I have spent many winters in England, and have known many Englishmen, but I have never met a true Briton who would boast of being a cosmopolitan and not a patriot. Happy England!

They tell me that there are prisons and lunatic

asylums in this country. Naturally—even in this happy land there are madmen and criminals—but they are considered and treated as such. In the present situation all the harm has been brought about by our past diplomacy, anxious, as it has always been, ever since the Turkish war of '76, to please the European Concert.

At this moment, of course, we fervently adhere to the policy of the Allies—and for this, indeed, one can only say "Thank God!" The aims and objects of the allied nations are identical, and we have one common end in view: victory over our enemy at any cost. This fact is not based on any vague, cosmopolitan craving to win the approval of some wretched concert, but is founded on the most ardent and determined sense of patriotism.

Now let us consider what is just now the real position of Bulgaria, and how this position has been brought about. Yes, the incredible has happened, the liberated slave has turned against the hand that gave him freedom, the but recently enchained captive fights side by side with his oppressors, and uses his armed forces against his brothers. We turn away in horror, and cry "Treachery!" The cry is taken up and repeated, its echo resounds everywhere, and it seems at first sight as though nothing could be said in defence or justification of an act so inexcusable. Our indignation, indeed, is just; but before we condemn an entire nation, let us look round for a moment and consider whether we cannot point the finger of our scorn and contempt at an object more deserving of such feelings than an ignorant

people victimised by falsehoods and intrigues, and drawn against its will into an adventure of which it is already tiring.

In the first place, European diplomacy, guided by Lord Beaconsfield, opposed Russia's imminent triumphant entry into Constantinople. In connection with this fact, I am tempted to recall the following incident.

Several years after the end of the war, ex-President Grant called on me in Paris, and put to me the following question :

" Can you explain how it happened that the Russians did not occupy Constantinople, when it was obviously entirely in their hands ? "

" Alas ! " I replied, " I have no pleasant explanation to offer. We never expected such a voluntary abdication of power. In fact, some of our military people telegraphed to Moscow, saying, ' To-morrow Constantinople will be occupied for several days.' The general conviction is that our Government, misled by news from abroad, telegraphed orders to our Generals not to advance."

General Grant, who was listening attentively, smiled, and said :

" Well, I can only say one thing. Had I been one of your Generals I should have put the order in my pocket, and opened it at Constantinople three or four days later ! "

Soon after the Constantinople mistake we again foolishly yielded to the demands of the European Concert, when the San Stéfano Treaty was opposed, and once more this was a terrible blow to our patriotic feelings, and a real misfortune to Bulgaria.

By Count Ignatieff's scheme, the Treaty of San Stéfano raised the whole of Bulgaria on this side and on the further side of the Balkans to the rank of a Principality. Bulgaria breathed again, and a bright future seemed about to dawn for her—when suddenly, once more thanks to the demand of European diplomatists, the newly liberated State was sawn asunder alive, and the best, the richest portion of its territory found itself once more under the Turkish yoke. As if this were not enough, it was insinuated, with an entire disregard for national attachments and views, that Russia must not dream of nominating a Russian orthodox Prince to be the Ruler of the new Principality.

No Russian messages or manifestations of sympathy are allowed to find their way into Bulgaria, for the Austrian has reason to fear the Russian influence. The remembrance of what Russia has done is not quite dead ; there is still a spark among the ashes, and perhaps even a faint breeze might revive the dying embers. Many people, indeed, are of opinion that there is profound truth in the following words recently pronounced by General Radko Dmitrieff, the Bulgarian General who is fighting in the Russian army against one common foe, the only foe a true Slav can acknowledge at this moment.

"Once the Bulgarians can be made to understand that they have been deceived, that Russia is no enemy, but rather, now as ever, their traditional friend, also that when the time comes for regulating frontiers and boundaries the Allies will be just and generous, great changes may be expected. There

may, indeed, be a repetition of that famous incident during the Battle of Leipzig when the Saxons, fighting on the French side, suddenly changed front and went over to the enemy. I should not be at all surprised if something similar happened in the near future." Yes. Bulgaria ought to follow General Radko Dmitrieff's advice—if she wants to be pardoned and saved.

A large section of the people is already bitterly discontented with the Government, and there have already been demonstrations in Sofia in favour of peace. During one demonstration that took place outside the Royal Palace, the demonstrators had to be dispersed by the police and a detachment of cavalry, several people being killed. In the best-informed Bulgarian military and political circles, also, great restlessness and uneasiness is being shown, and the whole state of affairs seems exceedingly unstable and uncertain. The poor Bulgarians, indeed, are in a helpless and inextricable position. From the moment of their liberation they have been in the hands of German Princes, who, encouraged by the German Press, have been spreading the falsehood that Russia is not to be trusted, and that she is rather an enemy than a friend!

Ferdinand has used every opportunity to emphasise this idea, and since the outbreak of the present war has steadily influenced the people into the belief that the Allies would, in the event of their success, crush Bulgaria out of existence. It is, indeed, probable that the fate and fortunes of the Bulgarian people do not touch Ferdinand very deeply—he, an Austrian, a Catholic, cares little for

the welfare of his orthodox State subjects. His object is to unite the Bulgarians with their former oppressors ; but such a union, even if it is, to all appearances, established, can certainly never be sincere. Ferdinand has learned from his German masters (first-rate masters, indeed, in such matters !) how to demoralise the poor uncultivated Bulgarians : demoralisation is not too strong a term—for Europeans who serve Turkish interests and persecute Christians are renegades of the worst description.

All this would certainly never have happened had Russia not yielded to the demands of the European concert after the Turkish war in '78. I must say here that the England of to-day is by no means the same as the England of Disraeli.

The Bulgarian people, indeed, perhaps deserve more pity than condemnation, and it is wrong to lay all the blame for the present state of affairs entirely at their door. It is, for instance, a significant fact that there are countless Bulgarian subjects in Russia to-day who have refused to answer the call of their Government, in spite of the losses and dangers of future vindictive persecution of themselves and their families which such an action involves. The former Bulgarian Minister in London and afterwards in Petrograd, M. Madjaroff, is said to have been imprisoned for treason the moment he touched Bulgarian soil. His offence was nothing more than a suspected gratitude towards Russia for the good done to Bulgaria.

Russia as well as England is naturally indignant with the attitude suddenly adopted by Bulgaria.

That only shows that Bulgaria is in the power of an Austrian Roman Catholic Prince, who is on the best of terms with everything Austrian. Just compare these two irreconcilable elements: an Orthodox people freed from the Turkish yoke of cruelty and persecution, and an Austrian Prince quite unprepared to guide his newly-annexed subjects, and penetrated with the idea of turning them as much as he can against Orthodox Russia, the Liberator of that people, and subjugating them to Jesuits and other anti-Russian elements. I remember Mr. Froude brought me one morning the British Ambassador at the Porte, Sir Drummond Wolfe. We began talking about the plan of granting constitutional government to Bulgaria. "But do you want their death?" I exclaimed. "They have no schools, no roads, no universities, no seminaries: and suddenly you want to plunge them into Parliamentary subtleties?" He smiled. "Yes. No doubt," said he.

Fortunately Russian and Bulgarian have not so far come into actual collision. It seems terrible to think of killing those we fought for forty years ago, or of having them kill our soldiers. There are many grave problems facing Europe, Bulgaria is not the least important.

In the meantime there are several lesser questions that demand attention, and I think one of these is unquestionably what to do with our prisoners of war. As I write news has come to hand that Germany is using 200,000 prisoners of war to strengthen the Rhine defences! In other words, to increase the death-roll amongst the Allies.

ST. OLGA'S SCHOOL FOR GIRL TEACHERS AT NOVO-ALEXANDROFKA

Roman lawyers were not kind to women. The code of Justinian says: "Women are not admitted to political activity," and adds laconically: "Propter animæ levitatem" ("They cause levity"). It is not unnatural if after such a compliment we lose the inclination to trouble ourselves about complicated and sometimes painful public questions. But —God helps the brave! And so, I take courage and step straight into the heart of a resolute and searching judgment on one such painful question: that of our prisoners of war. Men, almost without exception, maintain silence on this point, so why should I not try to investigate the matter? At the present moment our prisoners of war, including Germans, Slavs and Turks, number well over a million—that is, more than the entire army of, say, Bulgaria, Norway or Holland. Through the Press and private sources we know that Germany does not hesitate to make use of the working power of her war prisoners. They are kept hungry, and are forced to earn their bread by all kinds of labour, even purely military occupations.

How prisoners are employed in Germany is described by "The Man Who Dined With the Kaiser," that daring young neutral who penetrated into the heart of the enemy country and brought back much information valuable to the Allies. In *My Secret Service* he writes:

"At Buda-Pesth the Balkan-Zug was tidied and made presentable. Windows were cleaned by men having little ladders, and the compartments and corridors swept. To my great surprise I found that this work was being done by big bearded men in

Russian uniforms. I spoke to one or two of them, but they had very few words of German. They explained that they were Russian prisoners."

What are we doing with our prisoners of war? This indiscreet question never receives a satisfactory answer. Forty thousand prisoners have been placed in Government and private employment, but the remaining mass are twirling their thumbs, languishing in enforced idleness. This hopeless and monotonous inactivity has even here and there developed hooliganism in their ranks. And further, how have we placed the comparatively few to whom we have seen fit to give employment? I have received a letter from a lady landowner of my acquaintance, who tells me that after a long and complicated correspondence, ten prisoners of war were sent to her estate. The men were quiet, polite and respectful, and on their arrival were sent to the cattle yard to dig manure. But at this point came surprises: one of these prisoners was a violinist from an opera orchestra, another a photographer, a third a skilled working optician, a fourth a clerk, a fifth—but good Heavens! what is one to do with such farm labourers as that? The dull misery of their long complete inaction had so depressed them, that they were only too pleased to be occupied even if only with the roughest manual labour; but of what use is such work, and what return can it give for the outlay of the employer?

On a recent occasion, chancing to meet at a friend's house several army men, Government officials and financiers, I reproached them for their lack of initiative in not more practically organising

the means of using to our advantage this colossal and invaluable working force. As everybody knows, labour at this moment is so costly, that great national enterprises, such as the cutting of canals, the drying of marshes, the making of roads, the hewing of timber, are left neglected and unaccomplished through the costliness and general lack of working hands. Now I ask—where is the intelligent landlord, or other employers, who will take the risk of engaging, without even the roughest choice or selection, a heavily paid contingent of workmen containing the most fantastically mixed elements, persons of the most varied and contrasting stations and professions and habits, most of them in all probability entirely unsuited to, and incapable of, carrying out the work required ? In addition, who knows or understands anything about the legal aspects of the matter ?—all the special rights and special duties of these special workmen ? All the special rules in connection with insubordination or any other misdemeanour, if only the much discussed refusal to work ?

I will state my conclusions shortly : it is to my mind necessary, first of all, to compile and publish without delay, in the Russian, German, Turkish and all the Slavonic languages, a short and clear statement of the rights, the duties, the responsibilities of all prisoners of war within our Empire, pointing out that work is obligatory, that refusal to work will be punished disciplinarily and by maintenance on black bread and water. That remuneration will be given in part immediately, the remainder on the conclusion of peace, and on the condition that our

prisoners in Germany receive the like remuneration.

Then, it is indispensable to organise military detachments and contingents solely and entirely for the direction and government of the affairs of war prisoners. Numbers of these prisoners must receive a short and hasty course of training for Government national work, which courses, as also the entire administration of the army of working prisoners, can be under the direction of numbers of our brilliant officers and generals who have left the ranks crippled or otherwise incapacitated for further active service. They will be only too happy to take upon themselves responsible work for their country. Further, it is necessary to form a committee for inspection of prisoners in the Intendance department.

There is in our provinces a whole section that does not know how to occupy itself, since the closing of the vodka monopoly. Immense numbers of splendid buildings are standing empty. It seems to me that they could be without further ado turned into schools and reading-rooms with tea-rooms attached, whilst countless local Government excise clerks are entirely without occupation and would be exceedingly useful in the economic department of the larger national working enterprises.

Lastly, all the departments, especially those concerned with agriculture and land development, must be made immediately to set in motion all their sleeping projects: the making of roads and railways, the hewing of forest trees, the cutting of canals, etc., etc., all of which are lying on the shelf for

no other reason than the lack of working hands. Nobody will ever persuade me of the impossibility of employing disciplined detachments of our present war prisoners on the execution of many of these projects, especially those connected with building and agriculture. It is beyond question that the labour of the prisoners would immediately cheapen and hasten their completion. Of course, contractors for these undertakings will not make fortunes, and they will certainly do their best to prove the impracticability of the whole plan—but their loss is the country's gain.

Then again, I recently happened to make the acquaintance of the administrator of one of our northern provinces. He was raising with the greatest energy and enthusiasm the question of realising an already fully worked-out project of joining the White Sea to Lake Onega by means of canals. These canals were to cover a distance of 200 versts. Again, nobody will assure me that it is impossible to apply the labour of war prisoners to the execution of this and similar tasks of immense importance to our Empire. Peter the Great dug the Ladoga canal with the hands of his Swedish prisoners—a striking reproach for our present lack of enterprise.

How often it is necessary to recall to one's mind the examples of Peter and Catherine the Great! These reminders of old times usually receive the offensive reply : " Oh, in those days there were men—now we have no more men, only pigmies ! " No men ? In our Russia that is seething with talented inventors ? No men devoted to Russia,

to her honour and her might ? Indeed . . . we have our eagles. . . .

But to return to the question of war prisoners. Can it be that all I have dared to say is so obviously senseless or so excessively profound and complicated that men prefer to pass it over in silence ? Or does the question I have touched upon deserve no attention simply because the Romans disregarded a woman's opinion, seeing in it only levity, especially when connected with public questions ?*

German methods with war prisoners are vastly different from those of the Allies. The German is not content with using their bodies for carrying out his various schemes, but he strives to divert their minds from allegiance to their respective countries. It has been proved in a court of law, the witnesses giving evidence under oath, that in the case of the Irish soldiers, prisoners in Germany, endeavours were made to turn them into rebels. No form of duplicity or dishonour seems to come amiss to the German, and his methods with the Russian prisoners are not dissimilar to those practised against the Irish, and I can only hope that they will be as loyal to their country as were the splendid soldiers of our Ally.

With the Russian prisoners the German authorities occupy themselves with torturing the souls of all that fall in their hands, sowing discord and despair for future generations to reap. It is a terrible but authentic fact that the minds of Russian prisoners in Germany are being systematically poisoned by means of the propagation of atheism, nihilism, and

* Since this was written the Russian Government has given much more work to prisoners of different nationalities.

anti-patriotism, through every variety of that pernicious literature that was always so well received and patronised in Germany. Our soldiers beg for religious and patriotic books, instead of which they receive the very opposite, their gaolers hoping thus to deprive them of their sole remaining consolation, that of an unshaken faith.

One of the most encouraging things that I have heard recently came to my knowledge only as I was going over the manuscript of this book. The British authorities have taken up the question of sending educational books to the English prisoners in Germany. Apparently the men are tired of fiction, and they want some serious study, such as seamanship, engineering and various other crafts. What particularly interested me was the fact that simple Russian grammars and text-books are very much wanted, and these are being sent out. What greater link can there be between two nations than that each should speak the other's language? Our tongue, however, is by no means an easy one to acquire. Bismarck could not understand why Greek should be learnt at all. "If it is contended that the study of Greek is excellent mental discipline, to learn Russian would be still more so, and at the same time practically useful. Twenty-eight declensions and the innumerable niceties by which the deficiencies of conjugations are made up for are something to exercise the memory. And then, how are the words changed! Frequently nothing but a single letter of the original root remains."

CHAPTER XIX

THE RUSSIAN PARISH

The Revival of Parish Life—The Ancient Russian Parish—A Peaceful Community—Slavophils and the Parish—The Metropolitan and the Emperor Nicholas I—The Independence of the Church—Father John of Kronstadt—A Blessing to Russia

OUR new Metropolitan of Petrograd, Pitirim, fortunately considers the Parish question to be of enormous importance. He ascribes to it even the power for future victory over our enemies. The Metropolitan, of course, is a great authority, and the Duma seems to be sharing his views. The proposal in Orthodox Church circles is to bring back life to the parish, which at present seems to be greatly neglected and to be losing its legitimate ground. The resurrection of parish life has indeed long been hoped for. The plan for its revival is complete, and is only waiting to be made public. The Holy Synod, as is well known, has presented lately to the Duma a project that was due to the initiative of M. Sabler (now called Desyatovski). For some reason or other this project had been abandoned and withdrawn by its author, to the great dismay of many who are fervently Greek Orthodox.

The Metropolitan, Pitirim, is now making every effort to introduce into the Duma other projects

of great importance. In any case, however incomplete or imperfect these projects may be, it is imperative to apply them with as little delay as possible, practical experience being itself the best leveller of defects. How satisfactorily the reorganisation of parishes will revive Church life, we shall see. History, with which all who are interested in this question should acquaint themselves, gives ample evidence of how gradually this ecclesiastical arrangement has died out.

The ancient Russian parish was something very different from what is implied by the present meaning of the term. As everybody knows, a modern parish is simply a certain amount of property within the boundaries of a limited distance from a given church. Social life within the parish has of late been diminishing, and the activities of parishioners in parish matters scarcely go beyond the election of a churchwarden, and the payment of his wages. The part allotted to them in all other matters is purely passive, and consists principally of paying subscriptions to various brotherhoods and charitable institutions. In other words, if the priest happens to enjoy some authority or popularity among his flock, such institutions flourish by aid of voluntary contributions. In other cases, they exist only on paper, this deception being used because their upkeep is desired by the higher powers, disobedience to whom might have occasionally disagreeable consequences to the parish control.

How different is all this to old-time conditions! In bygone days, parishioners, in frequent cases,

built their own church, and therefore naturally regarded it as their personal property, dependent on their care for its needs and its welfare. Never was there an absentee at elections of churchwardens or other officials. Everyone was personally interested, the whole parish being like a large family, whilst all social and other activities revolved round the church. Close to the church was always a sort of market-place with booths and other such erections, where all the affairs of the neighbourhood were transacted, and where the people collected in gay crowds on festival days. Here also was a sort of social club, where the parishioners discussed the news of the day, and rested after their labours. The people were thus closely linked together, under the protecting shadows of their church. They had their organisations and their enterprises. For instance, they would club together to build homes for beggars and pilgrims to be received therein and fed and helped on their way. Sometimes also the churchwardens acted as bankers, and advanced money on prescribed conditions, to needy parishioners. In fact, to quote the words of Professor Titlinoff, the parish authorities considered it their duty to look after both the moral and material welfare of their flock. Family quarrels were regarded as a disgrace. Public opinion strictly required of all parishioners regular attendance at confession and communion, with cessation of work on Sundays and Church festivals. The parish sometimes also made itself responsible for the education of its children, providing teachers out of the church funds.

On festival days, great feasts were organised, to

which all participants subscribed in money and kind. These feasts were enlivened by public games and useful amusements. All this drew the people very closely together into a real, living Church and social organisation. Such were our parishes, as long as the system of an elected clergy lasted. But as the electoral system died out, social and independent parish life declined, the parishioners losing all personal interest in their church and its clergy. The church gradually ceased to be the centre of local life, the social club disappeared, the schools ceased to exist. The authority of the church weakened, and all general parish organisation was a thing of the past.

In some parts this influence of the Church is almost extinguished.

Now that attention has been drawn to these facts, real and serious efforts are needed to awaken general interest in the matter. This question of the revival of parish life is very serious and important. In the foundation of parishes lies the seed of future economic victory—for, without a parish, there can be neither solidarity nor union of interests, nor any means of utilising to the utmost all the resources of the nation for the benefit of our Church and State.

In view of the rumour that the parish will be renewed, some time ago an ecclesiastical parish meeting was held. The questions debated regarded the parish, and many resolutions were passed. One of the most important was to ask the Metropolitan's consent to renew meetings of clergymen of the whole town, parish churchwardens and representatives of parishioners to discuss and decide parish

questions, and by this meeting give a mutual understanding among all concerned in the question on hand.

Here the most prominent of professors should be allowed to express their opinions, as well as a number of other laymen.

In the parish life there are instances known only to the clergyman.

Up to now such instances have been the clergyman's realm of Christian duty which he made his chief care and happiness.

The Russian Slavophils were all supporters of the parish and its prerogatives. These always appealed to our ancient history and our traditions, and to see them appreciated at their real value by a man of such position as the Metropolitan, Pitirim, is certainly an event of great importance in the life of our Church, and especially welcome in our times, where there is decidedly a great religious revival throughout the whole of Russia.

Slavophils always maintained that religion ought to have the upper hand in questions where the temporal power was attempting to interfere. The following is a case in point.

As is well known, the Emperor Nicholas I was a very energetic man, who liked to have his own way. On one occasion he was strongly in favour of a step of which the Church disapproved. At that time we had as Metropolitan of Petrograd a very superior man, by name Plato. I must add that our Metropolitans have no difficulty in obtaining interviews with the Emperor. The Metropolitan, therefore, after putting on all his decorations, went without

hesitation to the Palace, where he arrived in great state in his carriage drawn by four or six horses. "Majesty," he said, laying all his decorations before the Emperor on the table, "here are all the gifts I have received from you. I will leave my carriage at your gates and return on foot as a poor monk. But I will never sanction the reform you demand."

The projected reform was abandoned. So do we, old-fashioned Slavophils, always supporting the independence of the Church, now welcome with joy the intention of the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan, Pitirim, to return to the parish system with all its former privileges which have of late years been neglected—indeed, almost forgotten.

In our times, in spite of the difficulties, certain efforts have been made to revive the parish question of ancient days. Thus, for instance, in Kieff, and in the diocese of Kieff, various brotherhoods have been organised which began with the starting of preaching and organising schools. And they soon discovered that in the same province there existed already about one hundred associations of the same kind, though in more limited forms. These were exclusively organised by the clergy. Thus, for instance, in one of the districts, there were already over thirty consumers' stores, started by the initiative of one single clergyman. The brilliant result of this initiative in the year 1913 represented already a considerable balance, which helped to open a second-class school, classes where trades were learned and where there were stalls of agricultural implements. The Brotherhood's Council then organ-

ised its own special committee, calling it the Agricultural Committee, whose task it was to "bring help to all ripening agricultural questions and to discuss them in council." Libraries, reading-rooms, moving pictures, choral singing, and sermons on education and other important requirements were thus established. Naturally those grew the most prominent which were already united by faith and prayer.

Brotherhoods of this kind admitted of no division in classes, corporations, or party factions, all being equals in the eyes of the Church. For general parish work there is room for every one; for the cultured landowner, the doctor, the teacher, and for every intelligent man, and also for every intelligent peasant. When an association of this kind bears the character of clericalism, being under the guidance of the Church, it is rooted deeper, and has higher objects, than when it is in private hands, where the interests are often purely egotistical or trivial.

We had, for instance, a remarkable example in the Reverend Father John, of Kronstadt, thanks chiefly to whose proverbial disinterestedness and other high moral powers, tremendous sums of money were offered voluntarily for his philanthropic work; this was practised on an incredibly large scale.

Father John, of Kronstadt, daily received streams of money, and always at once disposed of them in charities, keeping nothing for himself. When he died he left his widow so poor, that the Tsar intervened and a pension was allotted to her.

No one could be guided by a better example than we have had in the Reverend Father John, of Kron-

stadt, who, though he began life without any protection, and as a very poor and humble parish priest, attracted the whole Russian nation, inspiring a faith that approached the miraculous. Hundreds come daily to salute his grave and pray for his soul.

Similar parish reforms ought to be introduced everywhere in Russia, and it is a real blessing that the Metropolitan of Petrograd supports this movement. Had this been done already, the importance of it would have been realised not only in home policy, but also in questions of international significance. In former days members of such brotherhoods jealously pursued the severe dictates of the ordinances of the Church. It is evident that the chief enlightenment and prosperity of every Christian country lies in the moral conscience of her people in respect to the Church, as the arbiter of Power and Light.

CHAPTER XX

RUSSIA AND ENGLAND

A New Era—The Russian Ideal—The Trick of Double Nationality—Lord Kitchener's Legacy—The Armenian Inventor—The Kaiser and Double Nationality—The Future of Prussia—Russia's Hope of Victory—Germany's Influence on Anglo-Russian Friendship—Days of Suspicion—Lord Clarendon's Opinion—An ex-Cabinet Minister's Boast—Russian Memories of England—A Glorious Future

At the time I left England in May, 1914, there was, of course, no thought of the coming calamity. I wished to return in the autumn of that year to follow my usual habit of spending the winter in London ; but the declaration of this unexpected war changed all my plans, and I remained in Russia, returning in the late autumn of 1915.

It has been a great happiness to me to see how the friendship between England and Russia has become realised, and how with all the sufferings and mutual anxieties it becomes stronger day by day. The idea of an Anglo-Russian alliance has inspired me a good portion of my life. It is what I have worked for—my dream, my ideal.

The war takes an intolerably long time and is a great strain. The sacrifice of men is terrible ; the cost unprecedented. We have undergone much and lost much. Our Russian soldiers are equal in

bravery to the British, the French, the Belgians and the noble Serbs. We are inspired by the same high ideal, and therefore we must win. The new conditions of warfare have horrified the world—the suffocating gases, the atrocities, the diabolical machinery. Our task is not easy, but I do not think anyone in Russia doubts the final result. In spite of the new German weapons, the terrible cost, the German intrigue and corruption, and the tremendous sums that must have been secretly economised by Germany for the purpose of bribery, we shall win.

Then there is the German trick of double nationality—the becoming naturalised in Russia or England and yet retaining allegiance to the Emperor Wilhelm. I rejoice to notice that Great Britain is dealing with that so wisely and energetically, not, I believe, recognising nationality obtained within the last ten years.

Perhaps one of Lord Kitchener's most valuable legacies to his country may be his advice that no Germans should be given naturalisation papers in England for the next twenty-one years. The whole system of naturalisation in general is never a good or praiseworthy one. It kills real patriotism. Why can one not abolish it entirely in the whole world? We cannot at will take a new father or mother and break all the ties God and nature have given us—why then a new nationality? The habit of becoming a naturalised subject of some adopted country is most common among Germans, their Government rather encouraging the practice than otherwise, but not allowing naturalisation abroad to interfere in

any sense with the full rights of citizenship at home. This, of course, creates the great evil of double nationality that has done so much harm, among others to countless Russian subjects of German birth or parentage. The legalisation of the practice was accomplished soon after the Franco-German war of 1871, but it was kept quiet and very little was heard of it. I should like to quote an example of the harm done by this pernicious system.

A talented Armenian had invented some important novelty in connection with naval matters. For some reason no one took any interest in him in Russia, and his life's work seemed unlikely to achieve any result. In despair, he turned his steps to Berlin. There he was immediately appreciated, but as, by the German law, the Government cannot finance the enterprises of any but its own subjects, my poor Armenian, after much hesitation and grief, and with the permission of the Russian Government, became a German subject. Thereupon the German Government bought his invention, largely rewarding and providing for the inventor—only, however, after his official naturalisation as a German subject.

Some time after, this same Armenian, having lost all his means, and having suffered much from illness and other troubles, set to work and tried his luck in London. Here, however, his double nationality brought him nothing but trouble. Germans, in spite of his naturalisation, regarded him as a Russian, and Russians, since he had chosen to become a German subject, considered him a German. Neither the one nor the other would help him, and he was driven to despair and starvation.

The German Emperor has caught at the system of double nationality, and has done all in his power to create confusion in this connection. It is as though he had wished above all things to revenge himself on those of his former subjects who have adopted Russia as their country, and have become naturalised there. He has, by legalising the practice, sown discord and mistrust between the German Russians and the people among whom they might have continued to live peaceably and happily. Is not this the action of a wicked foe?

One of my friends, an experienced and clever judge, recently returned from the front, expressed himself to the effect that Wilhelm had dragged his hapless country into a state of Satanism and had everywhere sown dissension and bribery and evil and sorrow. This is indeed a fact and a danger of which by now not only Russia, but also France and England are convinced, and this very conviction has drawn the Allies more closely together, uniting them by an indissoluble bond, as they fight side by side in this war of liberation and self-defence.

Prussianism deserves merciless punishment, and a radical cure for its mad and boundless greed and ambition. Prussia must be forced back to its former modest dangerless limits. All the mischief done by and since '71 must be undone, and their military system destroyed once and for all.

Some people pretend that Prussia should be returned to the limits not only of the year '71, but to those of the Paris Treaty. I hardly think that so drastic a measure could be carried through. But of course we may remember that Berlin has

been once invaded by Napoleon, and that the same victories could be repeated in our time.

This is *par excellence* a war of good against evil. The good must always triumph—we must only be patient, stand loyally side by side, and struggle, struggle, struggle on to the end!

In spite of all, we shall win. On our side are—(1) Belief in the cause; (2) Faith in God; (3) Faith in the Emperor; (4) Faith in our Allies; or, to put it shorter, in the words of the motto of our Army, "Snami Bog" ("God is with us").

We sympathise deeply, too deeply for words, with England, and appreciate all she is doing. Our enemies, of course, have done their best to shake our confidence in each other. That is only natural, but we know that, but for the British Fleet, the Germans would have passed through the English Channel and invaded the coasts of France; that our Baltic shores would have been in greater danger; and that the German trade would have continued. We know what the British Army is doing, and we view with deep compassion and fellow-suffering the losses which it has suffered in Gallipoli, chiefly for our sake. We follow with deep sympathy Britain's Roll of Honour.

My personal belief is that our friendship will survive all strains, and will persist into the coming time when, with God's help, peace in Europe will be restored for many, many years.

It is now very interesting to look back and trace the growth of the understanding between Russia and England that developed into an Alliance. Symptoms of Russophobia began to disappear

MYSELF WITH MY FAITHFUL MAN AT BRUNSWICK PLACE, N.W.

about the middle nineties. Once the Indian north-west-frontier bogy disappeared, my mind became easier. Anglo-Indian suspicion has been not a little responsible for the breach.

The change was largely due to the rise of Germany. In the old days there was only one continent where the shadow of a European Power fell across the English doorstep. As Russia was that Power she monopolised alike the attention and suspicion. What puzzles me most is, how it has been possible for a nation that has shown itself almost uncannily suspicious of Russia, to permit Germany to make all the preparations she has made, and which for years it has been known she was making, without suspicion. British ministers became quite cross at the mere suggestion that Germany's aims were not entirely pacific, as if a man builds a Dreadnought for Cowes, or a submarine for Henley. Sometimes politicians seem to me very silly.

I remember Charles Villiers once writing to me that "in England there is a disposition to believe that Russia is an enemy of Liberty and a sort of ogre that goes about looking for sickly people to swallow them up."

This is exactly what England did believe for very many years. Nothing Russia did could be right. If she appeared to be actuated by high principles, people sought for some hidden motive; if, on the other hand, they could trace self-interest, then they contented themselves with saying that it was just what was to be expected from Russia.

There were, of course, exceptions to this rule. Charles Villiers himself, in that same letter, added

that he was not a party to so ridiculous a belief. Later, Lord Clarendon wrote to me expressing disbelief that Russia would go to war with Turkey; but in his mind there was the same suspicion of her actions. "That she should," he said, "see with the utmost confidence and resignation troubles excited in the East by others I think very likely indeed, and I cannot believe that the Prince of Serbia would make these preparations for exciting war unless he had the sanction of Russia. Russia may perhaps say with a safe conscience that she did not advise such measures, but can she declare that she ever said one word to disapprove or check them?" If she had done so, or would even now exert her authority, the Prince would become as tame as a mouse.

"I am not one of your category who 'cares not a straw for Russia,' for I know what vast elements of greatness she has, and that if she gives herself to develop her resources and consolidate her power, and does not yield to the lust of conquest, she must be the greatest nation of the world."

I quote these words because Lord Clarendon was in every sense a man who thought carefully before expressing an opinion, and it is easy to see even in his words some suspicion of Russia.

Another cause for the gradual change of public opinion that for some years past has been manifesting itself in England, is that Africa has displaced Asia in the international arena, and that over British Africa Russia casts, and can cast, no shadow, whereas other nations have been treading with heavy foot upon England's colonial toes.

No nation can be on bad terms with all its neighbours, as Germany will have good reason to know in the very near future, and the rising menace of German ambition synchronised with the lessening of the tension between Russia and England. The national danger for England had shifted to another zone.

Twenty years ago I wrote:

"It appears as if, at last, Englishmen were really beginning to understand that Russia is a sister nation, which is as great by land as England is by sea."

As I write I call to mind a dinner-party, at which an ex-Cabinet Minister, obviously wishing to frighten a foreigner, somewhat pompously remarked:

"You have no idea of the great power which England represents by her fleet. No other nation is a match for us."

He may have been right, but the tone amused me, and I said in reply:

"So much the better. It is a new argument in favour of my beloved scheme—the Anglo-Russian Alliance. Our army stands to us in the same relation as your fleet to you, and in case of need might supply your military deficiency. On the other hand, your fleet might perhaps work in union with ours. But even putting aside an offensive or defensive alliance of this kind, there is one fact which is clear—left to themselves, England and Russia, having such different weapons, cannot fight each other."

If I had ventured this as a prophecy instead of an ideal how I should have been laughed at; yet it has been realised, and the British Navy and the Russian

Army have been united at last. No matchmaker ever had more trouble in bringing together a self-conscious youth and coy maiden than those who have fought so long and so hard to bring England and Russia together.

Again, there was always that tendency on the part of England to interfere in the internal affairs of Russia. To this I have referred elsewhere. If we had started in Russia a society called "The Friends of Irish Freedom," with the names of Russian Cabinet Ministers upon the title-page, what an uproar there would have been. I have, time after time, striven to emphasise the evil done in the past to the growth of a proper understanding between the two countries by such societies as "The Friends of Russian Freedom."

Anyone who is cold to Russia may be said at this moment to be rather a pro-German. Also any Russian who is cold to England is also rather pro-German. Such people no doubt do exist. Every good cause has its enemies, and the cause of our friendship has had enemies all along.

But our friendship is founded on a genuine mutual admiration of Russians and English for one another. And when one says admiration, does not one mean in reality love? We like one another. We do not really distrust one another. Knowledge is this case always breeds affection. Against that fact all hostility from German and pro-German intriguers must fail.

The Anglo-Russian alliance is first of all one of hearts. My heart is with England. I feel that I now have two countries, Russia and my foster-

country England. The hearts of many English are with Russia. There are now many friendships.

It is also an alliance of minds. You read our literature with profit, we yours. You are interested in our arts and institutions, we in yours. It is also an alliance of economic interests, of pockets, may I say? We both stand to help one another in commerce. After the war this will increase with the passage of each year.

It is also an alliance of arms. We are both in the field against the common enemy, and the ideals for which we are fighting are one and the same, the motives similar.

Everything is helping forward the cause of Anglo-Russian friendship.

As far as my own experience of England goes she is not only unselfish, but really enthusiastic and full of generosity. Her patriotic self-sacrifice is displayed every day during this monstrous war. Young or old, experienced or inexperienced, everybody is anxious to fight or die for the glory of his country. As to her generosity, can anybody doubt that? In these two fundamental feelings Russians and English are very dear to each other. They only need to know each other better.

I have said this in Russia, and have described it many times. Let us remember, for instance, the splendid generosity of England during the famine of 1891 in Russia. That was a terrible time, especially in the province of Tamboff as I have explained, and we all remember how England helped.

Last summer, when I was at Alexandrofka, one of the old porters began talking to me about the

"English bread, which was sent by England." At first I did not quite grasp what he meant. Little by little I understood that he spoke of the English subscriptions which had allowed my son to sell bread at very cheap prices when everywhere else in our neighbourhood the cost was monstrously high. People came from the remotest districts to buy our bread. More than 100,000 people were thus saved from starvation. The philanthropic Grand Duchess Elizabeth, sister of our Empress Alexandra, also hurried to help us. The magnificent part played in Russia by the Society of Friends, represented by Mr. Burke and Mr. W. Fox, is well remembered by all of us Russians.

Somebody has said there are no small things. Everything may have great and important results, but nevertheless real.

At this moment, to my great satisfaction, my room is crammed with pamphlets and books about Russia, all kindly disposed and insisting upon the Anglo-Russian alliance. One regrets not to be able to grasp gratefully every hand that wrote such useful and excellent books. But there is no time to be lost. We must strive as much as we can to work harmoniously together. Even when this war is over and when written treaties are definitely signed, we must go forward hand in hand. Friendship lies not so much in the letter and the word as in the spirit.

As to the future, with Great Britain, France, Russia, and Italy working hand in hand, what has Europe to fear? In July, 1914, the Prussian War Party saw a "decadent" England, a still more

"decadent" France, and a Russia not yet recovered from her last war. In July, 1916, Germany has to face a New England, a New France, and a New Russia, and the time is not far distant when we shall have something like pity in our heart for Germany, the pity that one feels for alienated criminals.

It would be most unfair (not to say stupid) to forget the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of men with foreign names, who at this very moment are bravely fighting and sacrificing their lives for Russia and Russia's glory.

Every Russian—even those with scanty and superficial education—should always remember certain names with gratitude.

Let me take a few names at random. The best friend of the Slavonic cause was *Hilferding*. The great Academician, A. Behr, has opened Russia's eyes to our fishing riches, a great branch of our commerce.

Ostaken, who took the Russian name of Vostokoff, was the author of *Slavonic Philology*.

Dr. Haas—whom the people always call "our Saintly Doctor."

Then there were Barklay de Tolly, Todleben, and many others—who will always live in our history, and ought to be remembered with admiration and gratitude.

Thackeray said that three generations were needed to make a gentleman. But, surely, three centuries of honest allegiance to a country are required to make a trustworthy subject.

The present war will undoubtedly bring in its

train many reforms and changes in the most varied directions. Among these, it is imperative to look very seriously into the question of necessary and unnecessary expenses, and of luxury in both its good and its bad sense. That there is a clearly-defined dividing line between the two, is an obvious truth, an indisputable truism. Russia, as well as other countries, will, for a long time after the war, be obliged to exercise economy of the severest order. Self-defence will be necessary even when the clash of arms and the thunder of the guns have ceased. Great and inevitable problems face us wherever we turn. We need more churches, general education, new roads, and the development of all the latent natural wealth of our country.

All this is as important as our daily bread, without which there can be no life.

Yes, it is indeed a fact that well organised economy spells great and mighty results. Unfortunately, we cannot hide from ourselves the truth that large sums of money are constantly being spent on needless and foolish vanities. There comes to my mind a conversation that took place many years ago, during one of my visits to Moscow. The subject under discussion was connected with the buttons and gold braid on our military uniforms. Their arrangement was to be altered, and something added or taken away, I forget which. I listened for some time in silence, and then remarked with a smile that the whole thing reminded me of some typical discussion among Gogol's "fair ladies." "But you are mistaken," answered one of the Moscow experts seriously, "this is a matter that

has to be examined very carefully. Do you realise that the simplest change, the taking away or adding of one button or one inch of braid represents an enormous sum of money? When one is dealing with an army and a navy numbering millions, every extra thread deserves consideration. One must keep most careful accounts and weigh every detail conscientiously!"

Unfortunately, this is all too often left undone. Gogol's ladies disputed about "frocks and frills"; in our case the matter under discussion concerns our national income, of which we need every penny, and which it is incumbent on us not to waste. I repeat, we need, for instance, more churches. Have you ever been to the St. Isaac's Cathedral in Petrograd at Easter? Even such huge places of worship as this, or as the Kazan Cathedral, cannot accommodate half of the throngs waiting and thirsting for prayer.

I myself have often stood waiting for two hours among the crowd in the street unable to force my way through into the church.

But in addition to churches, we need general education. We must have more schools and universities, more roads, more libraries, more books. All this is anything but on a line with the "frocks and frills" of Gogol's ladies—no, we are discussing the welfare of Russia, and that is for us no trifling matter. Every insignificant change in connection with buttons or trimming affects the budget of our Empire—how much more then could be saved by giving up all the needless splendour and extravagance of our magnificent uniforms?

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At the time of the discussion to which I have referred, there was no thought of war, but happily, even in days of unclouded peace and prosperity, there are people who occupy themselves with the good of our country, and their passing remarks sometimes remain deeply engraved on the memories of their hearers.

If some good fairy were to appear before me at this moment and ask me to pronounce a wish, I would, without a moment's hesitation, repeat the words of my Moscow friend, and would add on my own account the wish that luxury might be done away with, that we might after the war never again see the old gorgeous military attire, but that it might give place for good to the modest war-time uniforms of the moment. These simple uniforms, indeed, will always bring back soul-stirring memories, for they are connected with the brilliant victories of our heroes, whose glorious deeds have astonished the whole world. These glorious deeds, this magnificent self-sacrifice is one of Russia's trophies. Let our children understand the meaning of these simple uniforms, and never forget them. Such economy and simplicity would be of immense benefit not only to our pockets, but to our ethical and moral education.

Wise remarks should be remembered. Of course, the great men of the day are not always those of the century.

On the other hand, simple, unpretentious, humble people make sometimes remarks of deep importance. We all ought to learn how to listen and understand what we hear.

Ah, yes! we have much, much to learn in every way!

One sometimes hears strange theories advanced in favour of magnificent uniforms. It is said, for instance, that they attract young people to the service. I cannot understand how one can even repeat such an ignoble argument. People who wish to serve their country are not guided by such thoughts as this. They have far higher moral requirements and ideals—ideals indeed that are far more likely to destroy than to encourage mean and petty vanities that sometimes show themselves in such varied forms among men and women alike.

Money can be a great power for good, when it is applied to the development of latent but deep-rooted national possibilities. This war has awakened all our activities and will guide our energies in the right direction. Russia, with God's help, will grow stronger than ever, will free herself from foreign elements and dangerous help, and will become a greater power than ever before.

CONCLUSION

AND now I have finished. I have told of some of the things I have seen, heard, and felt. I have drawn upon my recollections just as one might draw tickets at a raffle.

From my earliest childhood I have always been greatly attracted by people much older than myself. They taught me things that I wanted to know but was too lazy to learn through books and from governesses, who generally appeared to me stiff, cold, and unsympathetic.

Ugly and whimsical child as I was, outsiders generally took a fancy to me, and, through their conversation, my mind unconsciously obtained the habit of meddling with serious questions which I very often felt to be beyond me. This habit of meddling with things beyond my depth has never left me, with the natural consequence (Heaven knows !) of frequent disillusionments.

Now I have to reverse the order of my youth, and find interest in the younger generation more than I did when I was a contemporary.

However, my raffle is closed. I hope that some words of mine have not been in vain. It remains for Russians and Englishmen to get to know each other. When they do, their friendship will be indissoluble—I know both.

INDEX

INDEX

Abdul Hamid, 48, 157, 158, 161
Afghanistan, 81
Aksakoff, Ivan, 37
Alcohol in Russia, 168, 169
Alexandra, Empress, 23
Alexandrovna, Empress Marie, 73
Anglo-Russian agreement, 18, 25
Anglo-Russian Alliance, 94, 286, 293, 294
Anglo-Turkish Convention, 151
Armenia, 147, 148, 152, 161
Armenians, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152
Asquith, Mr. H. H., 79
Athens, 49
Austria, 95, 96, 203

Balkans, the, 31, 39, 41, 46, 85, 264
Baltic, the, 25
Baring, Walter, 26
Bartlett, Sir Ellis Ashmead-, 99
Belgrade, 31
Belgium, 23, 51
Berlin, 87
Berlin Congress, 149, 159
Béust, Count, 82
Bismarck, Prince, 50, 51, 60, 98, 277
Bludoff, Countess, 73
Bosnia, 31
Brunow, Baron, 23, 108
Bulgaria, 19, 23, 40, 113, 265, 267, 270
Bulgarians, 19, 267, 269
Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East, The, by Mr. Gladstone, 26

Campbell-Bannerman, Lady, 78
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry, 76, 78, 79
Carlyle, Thomas, 80, 81, 163
Cettingje, 31
Christ or Moses? Which? by Madame Novikoff, 58
Clarendon, Lord, 292
Cologne, 69
Constantine, Grand Duke, 247, 253
Constantinople, 47, 49, 72, 163, 266
Constantinople Conference, 46, 48
Cossacks, 37
Crete, 49
Crimean War, 203
Cyprus Convention, 151, 161

Daily News, The, 26, 39, 120
Disraeli, Mr. (Lord Beaconsfield), first meeting with Madame Novikoff, 24; his policy resented by Russia, 29; against the freeing of Bulgaria from Turkish oppression, 113; his high opinion of Abdul Hamid, 157–158; on the Treaty of Berlin, 159; on England's policy with regard to Asia Minor, 160; opposes Russia's entry into Constantinople, 266
Dmitrieff, General Radko, 267
Dogger Bank incident, 197
Dolgorouki, Prince Vladimir, 74
Döllinger, Dr., 57, 58, 68
Dostoyevsky, Fiodor, 236, 237
Douma, the, 49

Egypt, 94
Elizabeth, Grand Duchess, 137, 296
Emperor, Russian, 21
England, 20, 29, 30, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 49, 50, 52, 89, 93, 96, 97, 99, 100, 113, 118, 149, 151, 155, 158, 160, 164, 185, 186, 193, 194, 197, 201, 216, 217, 238, 242, 269, 292, 293, 294, 296

France, 79, 89, 203, 237
Franco-German War, 288
Freeman, E. A., 39
Free Russia, 199
Fock, General, 192
Fortnightly Review, 61, 163
Froude, Henry, 39, 66, 80, 82, 194

Germany, 22, 33, 50, 51, 95, 109, 203, 271, 277, 287, 291, 293, 297
Ghiray, Hadji, 31
Gibraltar, 49
Girardin, Emile de, 70
Gladstone, Mr. W. E., makes acquaintance of Madame Novikoff, 23; what he called her, 24; solitary championship of Russia, 25; publishes his pamphlet, *The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, 26; his anxiety about the future of England and Russia, 27; speaks at St. James's Hall, 43; a misunderstood incident, 44; his fearless denunciation of Turkey, 45; his friendship with Madame Novikoff criticised, 48; his dying utterance, 53; his character, 54; he reviews Madame Novikoff's *Russia and England*, 55; Cardinal Manning's opinion of him, 56; his interest in the Old Catholics, 57; a letter to Madame Novikoff, 58; another letter, 62–64; his interest in Shakespeare, 65; a talk with Hayward, 67; his love of books, 68; an incident at Munich, 69; at a dinner in Paris, 70; his knowledge of French, 71; a comment by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 102; on the Berlin Treaty, 147; urges the coercion of the Sultan, 152; a letter on Lord Salisbury's position, 153; on the Sultan of Turkey, 154; condemns the policy of Prince Lobanoff, 156; on the Cyprus Treaty, 161; on the history of nations, 219
Gladstone, Mrs., 40, 55, 67
Gladstone, Miss Helen, 69, 70, 71
Gortschakoff, Prince, 37, 51, 95, 105
Goya, Francisco, 84
Great Britain, 23, 34, 40, 48, 162
Greece, 49
Grey, Lady Sybil, 137
Grey, Earl, 137

Hague Conference, The, 30, 186
Hamilton, Bishop, 56
Harcourt, Sir William, 39
Hayward, 65, 67, 193, 194
Helen, Grand Duchess, 73, 74–77, 141, 142
Herzegovina, 31

Ignatieff, General, 46, 47
Is Russia Wrong? by Madame Novikoff, 162
Italy, 32, 203

Japan, 197, 257
Jews, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119, 120, 121

Kaiser, 20, 87
" Karaims," ancestors of, 122
Kinglake, A. W., 34, 39, 66, 82, 93, 97, 186, 187, 188, 192, 193, 194
Karaite Jews, the, 119
Keyserling, Count, 60, 77, 89
Khalil Pasha, 72
Khanoff, General Ali, 21
Khvostoff, Mons., 23
Kiréeff, Alexander, 31, 32, 50, 125, 248

Kiréeff, Nicholas, 31, 32, 33, 35, 39, 41, 51
Kireevo, 41
Kovalsky, Bishop, 179

La Revue internationale de Théologie, 61
Liszt, Franz, 138, 143
Lobanoff-Rostovsky, Prince, 103, 160
Loftus, Lord Augustus, 36, 37
London, 23, 77, 87, 100, 102, 104, 114, 115
Lucca, 32

Manning, Cardinal, 56, 57
Mariavites, the, 179
Mikoulin, General, 189
Milan, Prince, 32
Mohammedans in Russia, 21
Montefiore, Mr. George, 121
Moscow, 17, 18, 19, 36, 37, 49, 51, 68, 85, 141, 142, 298
Moscow Gazette, 106, 165
Munich, 69
Murchison, Sir Roderick, 89
My Secret Service, 271

Naoumovitch, Father, 96
Napier, Lord, 39, 72, 73
Nesselrode, Count, 95
Newmarch, Mrs., 145
Nicholas, Count, 47
Nicolaevitch, Grand Duke Constantine, 76, 141
Nicholas I, Emperor, 90–95, 97–98
Nicolas, Grand Duke, 74
Nihilism, 199, 201, 202, 204, 276
Nineteenth Century, The, 55, 163
Nordau, Dr. Max, 121
Novikoff, Alexander, 125, 127, 128, 170, 174
Novikoff, E., 104
Novikoff, M., 129, 134, 135
Novikoff, Madame Olga, in Moscow, 17; her ambition being realised, 18; memories of 1876, 19; introduction to Mr. Gladstone, 23; and to Mr. Disraeli, 24; what Mr. Gladstone called her, 24; her fight against prejudice, 26; Mr. Gladstone's visits, 27; her brother, Nicholas, goes to help the Slavs, 31; his death, 32; effect on Russia, 34; she assists the ambulance work, 38; in despair she blames England, 39; her English correspondents, 39; letter from Mrs. Gladstone, 40; at the St. James's Hall meeting, 43; Mr. Gladstone sees her home, 44; she writes to him, 45; back in Russia, 48; Russia declares war against Turkey, 49; she publishes her book, *Russia and England*, 54; which Mr. Gladstone reviews, 55; a letter from Mr. Gladstone, 58; she publishes a German pamphlet, 60; a letter from Prof. E. Michaud, 61; Mr. Gladstone writes to her, 62; Hayward, the critic, 65; her memory of Tyndall, 68; a visit to Miss Helen Gladstone, 69; her Thursday receptions in Russia, 72; her mother-in-law, 74; at the Grand Duchess Helen's ball, 75; she meets the Campbell-Bannermans, 77; her last talk with Sir Henry, 79; visits from Carlyle and Froude, 80; she visits Carlyle on his death-bed, 81–82; a memory of Mark Twain, 82; her friendship with Verestchagin, 84; her meeting with Skobeleff, 85; his last visit to her, 86; a talk with Prince Gortschakoff, 95; a reminiscence of childhood, 96; a tribute from Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, 99; her detestation of the word "mission," 101; a remark of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 102; a letter from Prince Lobanoff-Rostovsky, 103; her brother, E. Novikoff, 104;

a Press comment on her friendship with Count Shouvaloff, 105; her last interview with Prince Gortschakoff, 105; why she used the initials "O. K.," 106; in London, 108; a speech on Shakespeare, 110–111; her first public expression of views on the Jewish question, 112; letters to *The Times*, 114–116; her comment on the Sydney Street affair, 118; her attitude towards Jews, 121; in Russia, the famine, 125; her son, Alexander Novikoff, 127; interviewed by *The Week's News*, 128–136; a visit to Paris, 139; about Nicolas Rubinstein, 140–142; a talk with the Grand Duchess Helen, 142; memories of well-known musicians, 143–146; she hears of the Armenian massacres, 152; letters from Mr. Gladstone, 153–154; she tries to persuade her country that Disraeli does not represent England, 156; what she was told about the Cyprus Treaty, 161; she publishes *Is Russia Wrong?* 162; her dream of an Anglo-Russian understanding, 165; a conversation on the drink question in Russia, 166–170; in Petrograd, 175; in the village of Novo Alexandrovka, 177; about the "Mariavites," 179; memories of Scotland, 184; her first meeting with John Bright, 186; a talk with Kinglake, 187; his weekly letters, 193; about the Dogger Bank affair, 197; in London, 200; on the English idea of Siberia, 216; why prisoners are sent to Siberia, 217; her introduction to *Siberia as it is*, 220; her friend, Helen Voronoff, 226; on Russian prisons, 227; a visit from Dostoyevsky, 236; about Russia in 1905; on the Grand Duke Constantine, 247; a letter from him, 251; on Prince Oleg Constantinovitch, 252; a visit from ex-President Grant, 266; on prisoners of war, 272; on the Russian Slavophils, 282; her ideal in life, 286; on Prussianism, 289; on England, 295

Pall Mall Gazette, The, 102
Paris, 70, 73, 139
Parliamentary system in Russia, 214
Pasha, Madame Nubar, 100
Pears, Sir Edwin, 26, 47
Pears, Sir Edwin, *Forty Years in Constantinople*, 47
Petrograd, 18, 19, 36, 49, 68, 72, 97, 100, 111, 115, 118, 139, 141, 144, 166, 170, 175, 242, 243, 269, 299
Pobyedonostzeff, C. P., 68

Rakovitz, 32
Ratchinsky, Mr. Serge, 176, 177
Revue des Deux Mondes, 70
Roumiantzoff Museum, Moscow, 41, 86
Rubinstein, Nicolas, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143
Russia and England, by Madame Novikoff, 54, 107, 163
Russia, Tsar's reception in Petrograd and Moscow, 18; sympathy for oppressed Slavs, "Red Cross" collections, 19; pledge to save Serbia, 20; Mohammedans, 21; Emperor's New Year address, 21; political unity, 22; attitude towards Great Britain in 1876 and in 1914, 23; crisis between Great Britain and Russia, 25; inclination for war with Turkey, 26; bitterness against Disraeli's policy, 29; England blamed for Slav oppression, 30; Russian

volunteers to help Slavs, 31; army eager to assist, 34; effect of Nicholas Kiréeff's death, 35, 38, 39; Cossacks in disguise sent to Balkans, 36; chivalry of Russian nature, 37; Great Britain and Russia's distrust of each other, 40; England's attitude hostile, 43; war declared against Turkey, England's neutrality, 48; plans ascribed to England, 49; receipt of the news of declaration of war, 49; mission to Afghanistan, 81; eve of Russo-Turkish War, 85; smoking not common among women, 100; "Russians are Slavs," 106; Jewish question in Russia, 112; what the Hebrews did in 1876, 113; feeling between Slavs and Jews, 113; Yiddish jargon not used by Russians, 117; vigilance with regard to criminals, 117; famine of 1892, 125; sufferings of people, 126, 128–136; Moscow and Petrograd Conservatoriums, 141, people's interest in England's expressed sympathy for oppressed Armenians, 162; temperance measures, 167; Germans encourage sale of alcohol in Polish provinces, 178; reforms in Russia effected rapidly, 180; arrest of alleged Englishwoman at Warsaw, 196; Dogger Bank incident, 197; and a parallel, 198; feeling towards Nihilists, 202; war never desired, 203; effect of political murders, 209; people's loyalty to Emperor, 210; unlimited faith in new theories, 211; difference between students of 1840 and 1860, 212; parliamentary system unsatisfactory, 214; Russian nature, 214, 215; meaning of Siberia to Englishmen, 216; the convict's treatment in Siberia, 217; proportion of prisoners, 218; revolution of 1905, 237; the "Court of Petitions," 241; the Court of Appeal to Mercy, 242; prisoners taken for active service, 244; political prisoners' patriotism, 245; the ancient Russian parish, 279; proposed reforms, 281, 282; appreciation of England's assistance in European War, 290

Russo-Japanese War. 88

Russo-Turkish War, 85

Salisbury, Lord, 46, 47, 115, 152, 153, 161

Safonoff, M., 145

San Stéfano treaty, 149, 150, 266, 267

Sassoun, 148, 149, 151, 152

Serbia, 17, 20, 35, 41, 216, 217, 218, 248

Seymour, Sir Henry, 93

Seymour, Vice-Admiral, 198

Shouvaloff, Count, 103, 104, 105

Siberia as it is, by Harry de Windt, 220

Skobeleff, General, 85, 86

Skobeleff, Madame, 85

Slavonic Saints, 47

Slavs, treatment in 1875, 18; Russian sympathy, 19; Russia's pledge to help Serbia, 20; England blamed for Turkey's cruelty, 30; help from Russian volunteers, 31; Mr. Gladstone's sympathy, 45; Russia the only Power which cares for Slavs, 95

Smirnoff, General, 192

Smoking in Russia, 106

Sofia, 31

Staal, Baron and Baroness de, 102

State and its Relation to the Churches, by Mr. Gladstone, 56

Stead, W. T., 24, 103, 106, 237

St. James's Hall Conference, 43, 45, 51, 55, 105

Sultan, the, 30
Sydney Street outrage, 117, 118

Talmudist Jews, 119, 122
Tchaikovsky, 144
Tchernaieff, General, 32, 33
Tikhomirov, Leon, 204–215
Times, The, 112, 114, 115, 116, 154, 194
Treaty of Berlin, 147, 159
Treaty of Paris, 95, 105, 147
Troubetskoi, Princess Lise, 100
Tsar, the, 17, 18, 21, 51, 100, 114, 166, 177
Turkey, 30, 39, 45, 46, 48, 49, 72, 96, 97, 150, 160, 162, 181
Twain, Mark, 82, 83, 84
Tyndall, 66

Unsterblichkeitslehre nach der Bibel, 60

Vatican, the, 57
Vatican, The, by Mr. Gladstone, 57
Verestchagin, Vassily, 84–88
Verneuil, M. de, 89
Victoria, Queen, 50, 54, 55, 108
Vienna, 104
Viennese aristocracy, the, 66
Villiers, Charles, 39, 82, 291
Volnys, Madame, 73
Voronoff, Miss Helen, 226–228

Warsaw, 196
Watson, Mr. William, 157
Witte, Count, 178

Zaitschar, 37

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CONTENTS.

I. The Bindles at Home.
II. A Nocturnal Adventure.
III. The Hypnotic Fiasco.
IV. The Hearty's at Home.
V. Bindle Tries a Change of Work.
VI. The Hotel Corridor.
VII. Bindle Commits an Indiscretion.
VIII. The Great Conspiracy.
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